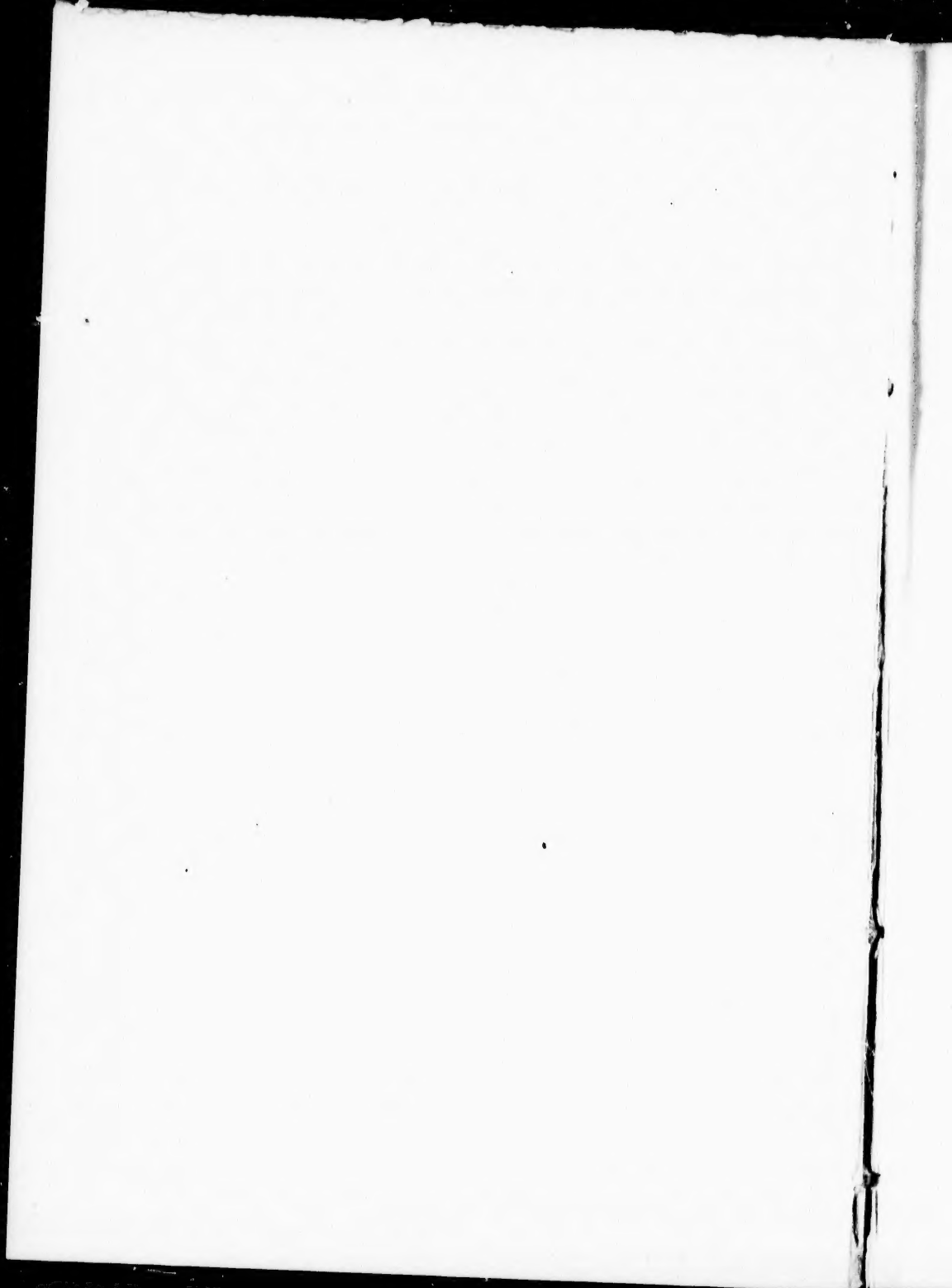
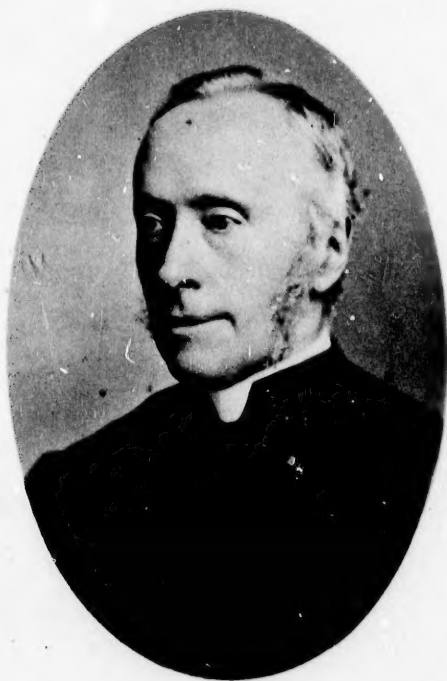


# SERMONS









Yours very sincerely  
George Whitaker.

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Yours very sincerely  
Margaret Whitaker

# SERMONS

*PREACHED IN TORONTO;*

FOR THE MOST PART

IN THE CHAPEL OF TRINITY COLLEGE.

BY

GEORGE WHITAKER, M.A.,

RECTOR OF NEWTON TONEY, WILTS :

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TO THOSE MEMBERS  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TRINITY COLLEGE, TORONTO,  
WHO HAVE REQUESTED THE PUBLICATION  
OF THESE SERMONS,  
THE VOLUME IS NOW INSCRIBED  
BY THE WRITER,  
WITH A MOST GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF  
THE INTIMATE RELATIONS WHICH HAVE,  
SO LONG AND SO HAPPILY,  
SUBSISTED BETWEEN THEM AND HIMSELF.



### ADVERTISEMENT.

Of the following Sermons, Sermons I., XIII., XIV., XV., XVI., XVII., XVIII., XIX., XXI., and XXII. were specially named for insertion in this Volume, by those who desired its publication.





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## SERMON I.

PREACHED IN TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL.

*For the Festival of S. Andrew.*

S. MATTHEW iv. 20.—“And they straightway left their nets,  
and followed Him.”

It can hardly fail to occasion us, at first sight, matter of surprise and disappointment that so little should be known to us of the personal history and character of those whom our Lord selected as the companions of His ministry on earth, and as the witnesses of His resurrection after He had been received up into heaven. And this the more when we bear in mind the terms in which He spoke of the peculiar importance of the office which the apostles filled, and of the peculiar honour with which the faithful discharge of its duties should be rewarded. “Ye are they,” said He, “which have continued with Me in My temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me, that ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of

Israel." It cannot surely be because no special honour pertained to "the glorious company of the apostles"—because no special recompense is reserved for them hereafter—that of some of them we know only the name, and are unable, by the help of any recorded word or action, to assign an individuality to him who bore it.

Of the saint whom we this day commemorate the notices recorded in Holy Scripture are very slight, though he is ever reckoned as one of the four whom some would regard as forming the first of three classes into which they distinguish the twelve, founding this distinction on the fact that, however the sacred writers may otherwise vary their arrangement of the names of the apostles, the several catalogues which they give may be marked off into three divisions of four, containing uniformly the same names. Thus S. Andrew, who is placed second in the catalogues of S. Matthew and S. Luke, stands fourth in that of S. Mark, as also in that which is given in the Acts of the Apostles. There are, moreover, two incidents recorded of S. Andrew in the evangelical history which tend to confirm the opinion that he occupied, with his own brother Peter and with the sons of Zebedee, a somewhat higher position than that which was given to the rest of our Lord's immediate followers. The first of these is recorded in S. John (xii. 20), when, on the application of certain Gentile proselytes to S. Philip

for admission to the presence of our Lord, we read that "Philip came and told Andrew, and again Andrew and Philip told Jesus." S. Philip uniformly ranks fifth in the catalogues of the apostles, and his reference to S. Andrew on this occasion leads us to conclude that some privilege of more familiar access to our Lord had been conceded to the four elder apostles. Again in S. Mark (xiii. 3) we are told that Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew (here, too, we may notice that the same order of names is observed as in the previous catalogue of the apostles given by this Evangelist) came to our Lord as He sat on the Mount of Olives over against the temple, and asked Him privately concerning the time at which His prediction respecting the destruction of the temple should come to pass. At the same time it appears that Andrew, if superior to the eight, still did not rise to the full privileges of the favoured three. He was not admitted to the chamber when the daughter of Jairus was raised; he was not present on the Mount of Transfiguration; nor summoned to watch with our Lord in His agony in the garden. From S. John (i. 40) we learn that he was one of the two disciples of S. John the Baptist, to whom their master pointed out our Lord on His return, after His temptation, to the place where John was baptizing; and who thereupon followed Him, who had been declared to them to be "the Lamb of God," and became His disciples.



Having thus shared, as it is supposed, with S. John the privilege of this first call to discipleship, S. Andrew brings to the presence of the Messiah whom he had found that brother who was subsequently so far more distinguished than himself. Beyond the brief record of a second call, given in Galilee, to a closer attendance on our Lord, the Gospel history records nothing more of S. Andrew than his reply to the question addressed by our Lord to S. Philip (S. John vi. 5) previously to the miraculous feeding of the five thousand; a reply which some have regarded as a proof of greater faith than that which was discovered by S. Philip, but from which it would seem that we are enabled to draw no certain inference, either as to the apostle's natural character, or as to his spiritual progress as a disciple of Christ.

We might, therefore, turn away dissatisfied from an examination of the direct notices which we find of this apostle, as well as of many of his colleagues in his illustrious office, did not the inquiry suggest itself, whether this very obscurity, which rests on names which we yet know to be so worthy of man's esteem, so precious in the sight of God, is not in itself instructive, itself alike a warning and a comfort to us.

It has been conjectured, not improbably, that it may have been the design of our Blessed Lord to present, in the college of His apostles, an epitome of His Church; to select, not those whom man would

have judged to be specially fitted for the duties to which the apostles were called, but to lay His hand upon our common nature under its various phases, and to prove how He, the great centre of humanity, could draw to Himself and consecrate to His sacred service widely differing aspects of human character, widely differing degrees of moral and intellectual power.

The call of Judas may well be regarded as typical of the universality of Christ's redeeming purpose; as significative of the truth that He came to heal and cleanse all. For that unhappy man, the hopeless slave, as the world would deem him, of sordid greed, destitute, as it would seem, of any trait which might challenge the respect, or even awaken the sympathy, of human hearts—even for him we cannot doubt that not only the kingdom of heaven was opened, but also that a throne in that kingdom was prepared. He was called to be not only a follower, but an apostle of our Lord. Nor can we think otherwise than that his high commission was given him in mercy; that He, who willeth that all men should be saved, strove to win him by this distinguished privilege—to sanctify him by calling him to the discharge of holy functions—to draw off his carnal mind from earthly interests, by bringing it into close contact with the things of heaven. Thus did the chosen band of the apostles present, even in its darkest aspect, a lesson of godly

wisdom; teaching us to bear, with faith and with meekness, offences such as the Son of God Himself consented to endure, and not to suffer the unworthiness of any minister of Christ to cause us to doubt that He is still present with His Church, who, when He chose twelve who should be with Him, chose Judas as one of the twelve.

From the character of Judas the character of the rest of the apostles is, indeed, widely removed. "Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" said our Lord. There was a vast gulf between Judas and the remaining eleven. Still we may probably infer that the same comprehensive mercy which suffered the traitor to be reckoned among the apostles, also guided the choice of the rest. They would seem to have been men of very different intellectual and moral endowments; types, probably, of large classes among mankind; marked, in all likelihood, by peculiarities of character to which our ordinary human sympathies would be incapable of extending themselves alike, and which He only could alike compassionately regard, in whom humanity was perfect, warped by no prejudice, swayed by no passion, impaired by no weakness or defect. The impetuous self-confidence of S. Peter, the gloomy dejection of S. Thomas, the fiery zeal of the sons of Zebedee, the carnal conceptions of S. Philip, all these the Lord alike reproved, reassured, tempered, or refined; instructing

us how largely, how deeply, He loved the nature of man, and how patiently we ought to love and tend it for His sake.

And, as the apostles differed in moral qualities, so, too, did they differ in intellectual endowments. We may err by thinking that our Lord, in choosing as He did unlearned men of private station, neglected to engage in His service the higher powers of the human understanding. The fervid eloquence of S. Peter, the calm grandeur, the pure and gentle persuasiveness of S. John, may sufficiently prove that the Redeemer did not despise those goodly gifts with which His own creative hand had enriched the intellectual nature of man; yet we must bear in mind that, in the instance of the majority of the apostles, these superior gifts were, to all appearance, wanting—that many of the twelve have left no record of their teaching for the permanent edification of the Church, and that the Gospel narrative furnishes no trace from which we may conjecture that they were possessed of more than ordinary mental endowments.

On the whole, we may probably without rashness conclude that the college of the apostles was designed to be, in respect of intellectual power, a type of what our Lord foreknew that the instructors of His Church would be in all ages; and, if this be so, we may surely derive from the fact some most important lessons.

And, first, what a relief is it not to turn from the

demands which man is apt to make on our intellectual capacities, to the demand which God makes ; to look away from the goal which man proposes to our ambition, to that which God sets before us as the end of our hopes and endeavours ? Man often invites us to a contest in which few—very few—can be crowned, and seems to require the multitude simply to sacrifice themselves for the honour of those few. Even when we incite youth to what is called wholesome emulation, do we not seem to be bidding the great majority to seek a prize which they can never gain ; to live on hopes which must be disappointed ; to make some object, which is probably unattainable, the aim and purpose of their lives ? The aim which God proposes to us, while it supplies a far stronger and more constant motive to exertion, and, if kept in view, ensures, far more than any other object can, the fitting use, the due development of the powers of our understanding, still comforts all alike by the prospect of assured success to hearty and earnest endeavour. He who gives the one talent, the two and the five talents, requires from each of us a return proportioned to the gift wherewith we have been entrusted ; He despises not any gift of his own hand, any honest effort to improve that gift. All alike have the same welcome, the same reward, from Him, if they have proved themselves faithful stewards of the trust committed to them. There is a contemptuous pity which we are

too prone to feel for those whose abilities are small, of which we may be assured that it is evil, because it cannot consist with a reverent recollection of God. He dispenses His gifts in different degrees, and we must improve these gifts accordingly: they who have received much, with a humbling conviction of their increased responsibility; they who have received little, with the cheering recollection that that little is the gift of God, to be employed to His honour and to their own endless good.

But, again, we must bear in mind that the gifts of the understanding are but a part of those endowments with which God enriches His reasonable creatures, and that, if we are right in supposing that the majority of the apostles were men of no high intellectual power, we are thus taught how great is the value of moral and spiritual qualifications, more especially in the instance of ministers of the Church of Christ. Experience undoubtedly proves this. It is quite possible that a man, during the years of preparation, may outstrip his fellows in the acquisition of knowledge, in the apprehension of Christian doctrine; he may, when he has entered on the office of the ministry, be more competent to give instruction than others; and yet he may find, as years pass on, that he has not been doing so well as others whom he has been accustomed to regard as his inferiors; that he is not loved and honoured as they are; that he cannot believe that he

has been doing the work of Christ as they have been doing it. And why is this? Because his moral and religious qualifications are not such as theirs; because he has not their meekness, their patience, their self-denial, their perseverance and singleness of purpose; because he has not disciplined himself, as they have, to tread faithfully a constant round of unobtrusive duties—sowing, because they observe not the wind, and reaping, because they regard not the clouds. We may be well assured that moral qualifications must enter largely into a just estimate of a man's fitness for the office of a minister; and, by bearing this in mind, we may understand better than we should otherwise do the law by which our Blessed Lord chose His apostles. Knowing, as we do, scarcely anything more of S. Andrew than that which the text tells us, and on which the Collect for the day enlarges, how "he readily obeyed the calling of Christ, and followed Him without delay," we may yet discern, in this one act, a proof of high fitness for the office to which he was called. The simple and lively faith which drew him from the occupation which habit had endeared to him, and to which he had long been accustomed to look as his sole means of subsistence, the enduring faith which kept him at our Lord's side during the three years of trial, was a qualification for the apostolic office far higher than any merely intellectual endowments could have been. Those simple-minded men, who bore the

reproach of Christ alike in the wilderness and in the city, in the synagogue and in the temple, proof against the wayward passions of the multitude, and the chilling contempt or dangerous indignation of their ecclesiastical superiors; unshaken by the startling contrasts which evermore presented themselves in the circumstances of our Saviour's life on earth, by the strange blending of power and weakness, of glory and humiliation, which marked the first coming of the Son of man—these men showed, as they trod their silent and unobtrusive course, that they were indeed, in respect of qualifications of the highest moment, well fitted to bear the name of Christ before kings and rulers, and to publish His salvation to the ends of the earth.

Let us bear in mind, therefore, that for the highest and holiest service in which God employs us on earth, the qualifications are of different kinds, partly intellectual and partly moral, and that the moral are the weightier; that, so far as we can judge, the latter were chiefly regarded by our Lord in His choice of the twelve.

Let us remember, too, that they will be chiefly regarded by those amongst men who really profit by the instructions of the ministers of Christ. They will value Christ's stewards as they are found to be *faithful*. They will value them for their diligent performance of those parts of their duty which least



demand intellectual power ; which most require that moral strength and patience which can dwell only in a pure and chastened and believing heart. The steady friend, the prudent counsellor, the diligent and kindly visitant of the aged and the sick, the patient and gentle instructor of the young—this is the man whom years will prove to have been the best qualified—the most successful—minister of Christ ; and all this a minister may be to whom God has given but small intellectual endowments ; all this a minister must be if, being possessed of high abilities, he would truly consecrate them to the service of his God.

The example of the apostles, then, may teach us to make a sober estimate both of ourselves and of others ; remembering, in our own case, how much our fitness for God's service depends on our possessing those moral qualities which absolutely preclude all self-confidence and high opinion of ourselves ; and, in the case of others, how far they who are confessedly our inferiors in some obvious intellectual endowments may yet surpass us in the faithful administration of the gifts which they have received, and in the possession of those graces of the Spirit which live and work in secret, and which shall not be known, in respect either of their intrinsic excellence or of their abundant fruits, until the day when "every man shall have praise of God."

Many of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, whose

names shall be inscribed upon the foundations of the New Jerusalem, have yet left nothing more than a name upon the earth. Let us not, then, think it strange if, in serving Christ, we seem to be destined to pass away forgotten; nor let us be tempted to deviate at all from the path of duty, or to forsake in the least our proper sphere, for the purpose of making ourselves known, or of seeking the praise of men. Let us be content to be known and valued only by those to whom our duties make us known, and whose esteem we are bound to seek; and if, when we pass away from the earth, our names should live only in their remembrance and die with them, let us know that we are but sharing the common lot of the great multitude of those whose names are written in heaven. Let us know, too, that it is probably for our instruction, and for the checking of our vain regrets, that so little opportunity has been given us of investing with their appropriate honour the first disciples and followers of our Lord; the story of their lives, their peculiar services, their distinctive excellences, being reserved to be learned by us hereafter, safe treasured in that world where all is held in everlasting remembrance which has been done in the faith and fear of God, in the name of Christ, and for the love of the brethren.

## SERMON II.

PREACHED IN TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL.

*For Christmas Day.*

S. LUKE ii. 19.—“But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.”

WE read in the Gospel for this day that, when God the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, “He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.”

That God manifested in the flesh should have been thus hidden from the minds of His creatures, thus despised and rejected of them, is indeed to *us* matter of astonishment; and but little thought is needed to convince us that it must have been a very painful trial of the faith of those to whom God first announced that the fulness of time was come, and that He had sent forth His Son. The promise of four thousand years was indeed strangely fulfilled, and they who witnessed its fulfilment had, no doubt, to give up many preconceived opinions of their own as to the

mode of its fulfilment, and to renounce their own vain imaginations of what God *would* do, in order that they might meekly admire or devoutly believe the divine wisdom of that which God *had* done. That our Lord's birth and life should have been so obscure as they were, that none of the princes of this world should have recognized Him, that He should have been thus recognized only by those who really loved His doctrine and His example—all this, no doubt, was ordered by the unsearchable wisdom of God, and we may in part discern its fitness; we may perceive that God's power and glory were, in the end, more fully declared by the utter weakness and helplessness of that form in which the Son of God took upon Him the nature of man; and we may also thence be taught to know that to Him who stooped from heaven earth had nothing to give which was worthy of His acceptance, and that the manger did but very feebly express the depth of His humiliation when He emptied Himself of His glory, and consented to be made in the likeness of sinful flesh. To become *man*, that was the humiliation; to take the manhood into God, that was the condescension. An earthly throne had been no throne to Him, for it is He that "sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; all nations before Him are as nothing, and they are counted to Him less than nothing and vanity." Man's pride, therefore, may have been very wisely

humbled by the meanness of our Saviour's birth. He may have chosen the lowliest place on earth partly that we might be reminded how low to Him, how utterly unworthy of Him, had been earth's highest place.

But, while the Redeemer's coming was thus noiseless, His entrance into our world thus silent and obscure—while it was thus hidden from the minds of men in general that the glorious promises of God, made to patriarchs and prophets, had been at length fulfilled—let us not think that God did not, most clearly and infallibly, mark to a chosen few the fulfilment of His Word, and give them most convincing evidence that Deity was veiled beneath the lowly and feeble humanity of the Child Jesus. “In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established:” such was the rule which God gave to man concerning the proof of facts; and He Himself did, by the mouth of many independent witnesses, confirm the faith of those who were first called to believe that Jesus was the Christ. In order, then, that our faith may be confirmed in Him whose birth we this day celebrate, let us turn to the Gospel history, and endeavour to trace the several signs by which God strengthened and comforted the hearts of those to whose faith and love He deigned to entrust His incarnate Son.

And, first of all, to the Blessed Virgin herself the angel Gabriel appears, to assure her that she shall be

the mother of the Son of God, "the Holy Ghost coming upon her, and the power of the Highest overshadowing her." Sufficient ground to believe this wondrous message no doubt Mary had—it would have been sin to discredit it—but still there is strong reason to conclude that she could only *believe*, and did not *know*, that an angel had spoken with her. We are told that at first she was *troubled* at his saying, which she could hardly have been had she been assured that he was a messenger from God. Nor are we warranted in assuming more than that ere the angel departed from her she had learned meekly to *believe* his wondrous tidings.

But, however strongly convinced herself, to convince any other human being of the truth of the angelic appearance, and of her own glorious expectations, may well have seemed to the Virgin to be beyond her power. We find, however, that she at once resolved on communicating the tidings to her kinswoman Elisabeth, choosing her, probably, because she had been mentioned by the angel himself as one for whom God had wrought in a way only less miraculous. And, at this point, let us mark God's renewed testimony—His gracious regard for the comfort and assurance of the heart of His handmaid. Mary came to entrust to her friend, no doubt with trembling anxiety as to the effect which her communication might produce, the great and strange

things which, as she believed, God was doing for her ; but, instead of having to execute this painful task, she hears at once, from the lips of Elisabeth, the confirmation of her faithful hopes, the quieting of her fears. When Elisabeth heard her first greeting, " the babe leaped in her womb for joy ; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost : and she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me ? " How strangely, how unexpectedly, must these words have fallen on the ear of the Blessed Virgin ! There is, then, another who knows her secret already ; there is another human being who believes even as she has believed—yes, perhaps yet more strongly ; who rejoices in her exaltation, commends her for her pious trust, assures her that it shall not be disappointed, and greets her as the mother of her Lord. What a change must have been wrought at this moment ! what a relieving of an overburdened heart ! She has now one who shares with her the weight of the glorious yet perplexing revelation—one who has been, like herself, heaven-taught. In the mouth of *two* witnesses the Word of God is established. The silence of Holy Scripture is oftentimes more expressive than any words could be, and here it is most worthy of remark, that while no direct mention is made of the effect produced on the mind of Mary by Elisabeth's inspired greeting,

that effect is yet most forcibly declared by the words of the Blessed Virgin which immediately follow. To the angel, in her first awe and perplexity, she had said, with meekness rather than with exultation, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord ; be it unto me according to thy word." But now the repetition of the marvellous announcement, and that by a human voice—the voice of a well-known friend—produced within her profound emotions of joy and thankfulness, and called forth a sublime burst of holy gratitude. "And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For He hath regarded the lowliness of His handmaiden : for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed." She seems now, for the first time, to have realized the glory, honour, and immortality to which her God had called her—the place which she must ever hold, till the end of time, in the esteem of those who should be gathered into the fold of Him, who was to be her Lord and yet her Son.

Thus far two witnesses have we to the great truth that Jesus is conceived by the Holy Ghost and to be born of the Virgin Mary ; let us now turn to a third, and that a most important witness. Mary, as we read, was espoused to Joseph, a man of the house of David. We do not learn that either Mary or Elisabeth made any attempt to impart to him what had been made known to themselves. They probably



thought that, in so strange and unparalleled an instance, one, too, in which God's working was so visible, quietness and confidence were their best strength—that God would provide, while they should hold their peace and await His pleasure. Not soon, however, was that pleasure made known. Months passed away, and Joseph, either not having been informed of, or not crediting, the truth, was intending privately to put away his espoused wife, when to him also the angel of the Lord appears, bidding him take her to him, and assuring him of the divinity of the Child who was about to be born.

If, then, Mary's heart had been assured by the greeting of Elisabeth, must not the faith of both have been wondrously confirmed by this third testimony to the truth of God, when Joseph marked his own undoubting conviction of that truth by conduct which nothing less than a divine command could have induced him to adopt, or justified him in adopting? And when he too declared that Jesus was to be the name of the Child, must not Mary have felt how graciously God was condescending to human weakness, in repeating to her husband the instruction which had before been given to herself; thus certifying both that they were trusting to no illusion, but that to her waking senses, and to him in dreams, the same divine communication had indeed been made? Here, then, are three human beings, each independently informed

by God of the same wondrous truth, strengthening and comforting each other's hearts by the accurate correspondence of their several convictions, assuring each other that they are giving heed to no cunningly devised fable, preparing each other to be witnesses, if need be, to the whole world, that the Word is about to be made flesh.

No doubt they oftentimes wondered at the grace given unto them, at the secret entrusted to their keeping; they wondered, no doubt, that this treasure should be in vessels so mean as they—that God should have chosen things so weak and so despised as they. They marvelled, no doubt, that the great and the wise of their nation were not instructed to expect the approaching Messiah, that the people at large were not warned to be in waiting for the coming of their King; yet, however astonished they might have been at the mode of God's working, that His working it was they could not doubt. Few as they were, mean as they were, they knew that He had chosen them to witness the first rising of the Sun of Righteousness; however unworthy they may have deemed themselves to be entrusted with God's wondrous secret, they could not doubt that His secret *was* with them.

And again, as time passed on and brought further trial of their faith, further cause of perplexity, God summoned other witnesses to the truth of His Word; strangely blending, with the humiliation of His

incarnate Son, solemn intimations of His unearthly majesty, and enlightening the gloom of His visible weakness with bright tokens of His invisible power and glory. How lowly, how forlorn, were the circumstances of our Saviour's birth! Poor had been His cradle had He been born at Nazareth; yet there, at all events, His mother could have sheltered Him in her own home. At Bethlehem she was but a stranger, and, the town being full on the public occasion which drew her thither, she, like a poor stranger, finds no room in the inn, and brings forth her firstborn in a stable. No doubt even they who stood by commiserated the mother and the infant, looking on them only as two human beings, destitute of ordinary comforts: but to Mary and Joseph how perplexing must have been this unlooked-for aggravation of the meanness of the Redeemer's coming; how must they have been amazed that God should have appointed for this most glorious of all births, circumstances of unwonted discomfort and dishonour! Yet there, in the stable, to the Saviour in the manger, does God bear witness. In the darkness of the night, strangers come in to search for a wondrous Child, of whose birth they have been informed by an angel; and, even because He is laid in a manger, do they confess Him to be their Saviour, Christ the Lord. They tell of the angel who came upon them, of the glory of the Lord which shone round about them, of the good tidings of

great joy that were published, of the multitude of the heavenly host which they beheld ; and their looks and their actions bear them witness that angels have indeed been talking with them, for the glory of that heavenly vision hides from them the earthly poverty which they now behold. They see Him of whom the angel spake to them, and this suffices ; they return, glorifying and praising God. "All they that heard," we read, "wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart." Well might she do so ; they are the food of her faith—the bright, the glorious side of that great mystery, "God manifested in the flesh." The shepherds again have borne their witness to the truth of God ; there are now yet more who have seen the Lord's Christ ; and Mary and Joseph will better endure that men should account Him to be their Son, inasmuch as God has taught these other chosen witnesses to confess Him to be the Son of the Most High. Remarkable indeed is this light shining so brightly in darkness, this testimony to the divinity of our Lord, beaming forth all the more vividly by reason of the gloom which it pierces.

So, again, when the days of Mary's purification were accomplished, and she went up to present her firstborn Son in the temple, there was much to disquiet, yet more to reassure and comfort her heart. There is a prophecy in Malachi (iii. 1), "The Lord, whom ye seek,

shall suddenly come to His temple ;” and Haggai had prophesied (ii. 9) that “the glory of the latter house should exceed the glory of the former, because the Lord should fill it with His glory.” How widely different from any anticipations which these prophecies might have excited was the actual appearance of our Lord for the first time in His Father’s house, and how strangely must external circumstances have contrasted with the solemn faith which the Virgin and her husband had been taught to cherish concerning Him ! They came, probably, amid a throng of fellow-worshippers, undistinguished from the rest ; they came to offer the poor man’s gift, the pair of turtle doves, being incapacitated for making the richer offering of the lamb. None who were present felt any interest in their coming ; none knew that the Redeemer of the world was being Himself redeemed in accordance with the law, that the Holy One of God was now being called holy unto Him. Yet, amid this general unconcern and ignorance, God chose for Himself a witness, who should greet his Saviour in the temple, and make His first coming thither ever memorable. Simeon, a just and devout man, to whom it had been revealed by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ, came by the Spirit into the temple, took the Infant up in his arms, and blessed God, because his eyes had at length seen His salvation. To his testimony was added

that of the prophetess Anna, "who gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of Jesus unto all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem."

Thus gradually were accessions made to the number of heaven-taught witnesses to the truth that the Infant Jesus was the Christ, closing with the wondrous testimony of the magi, who came from the East, moved by the appearance of a star, that they might worship Him who was born King of the Jews. These were the firstfruits of the Gentile world; and when they knelt before the little Child, offering Him gold and frankincense and myrrh, they strongly proved that the arm of the Lord was indeed with Him, who, while unknown to the world, was thus miraculously known to those whom God had chosen out of the world to be His first worshippers and witnesses. No wonder, then, that "Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart;" a comfort under daily trials, a shield against unbelief, a glorious memorial that the Child who grew before her, called and accounted as He was the son of Joseph, was indeed no other than the Son of God.

Let us, too, keep these things, and ponder them in our hearts. Let us not disregard the manifold testimony which God gave, even at the first, to His incarnate Son. He instructed the Blessed Virgin by the open vision of an angel; He enlightened Elisabeth by the inspiration of His Holy Spirit; He warned Joseph in

a dream ; He caused to shine around the shepherds a divine glory, and taught them, by the exhortation and example of angels, to greet with joy and praise their infant Saviour ; He guided the feet of Simeon and Anna into the temple ; He led the magi to Bethlehem to worship ;—not for their own sake alone, but for the sake of His Church to the end of time, that we might look back, and repose our faith upon this complicated testimony, gratefully confessing that “these things have been written that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God ; and that believing we might have life through His name.”

### SERMON III.

PREACHED IN TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL.

*For the Festival of the Conversion of S. Paul.*

S. MATTHEW xix. 27.—“ Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee ; what shall we have therefore . ”

THE inquiry of S. Peter which the text contains drew from our Lord a remarkable reply ; a reply strongly indicative of “ the meekness and gentleness which was in Christ ”—of His tender compassion for human infirmity, of His solicitude to develope and encourage what is good in man, as well as to warn him of that which is evil. The rich young man, who had come to ask how eternal life was to be attained, had gone away sorrowful, because he had been counselled to forsake his great possessions and follow Christ ; and our Lord had seized the opportunity thus presented of inculcating upon His disciples the great peril of riches, and the impossibility that they who trusted in them should enter into the kingdom of God. While the minds of the other disciples were occupied by the



awful warning thus conveyed, and by the new view which had been set before them of the necessity of self-renunciation, S. Peter seems rather to have dwelt on the contrast between the condition of himself and his fellow-apostles and that of the young man who had been so unhappily offended by his Master's teaching. He seems to have concluded that they had even now made the sacrifice which he was unwilling to offer, and he triumphantly inquires, "What shall we have therefore?" His inquiry denotes an ardent and sincere attachment to his Lord—a conviction that he had renounced all, and was prepared to encounter all, for His sake; but it also discovered an undue satisfaction in the past, an undue appreciation both of motives and of actions, and an overweening confidence that the hour would never come when he might forget his first love, and so forfeit the reward which he regarded as already won. He to whom all hearts are open, and to whose absolute purity the sins and follies of the human heart must be unspeakably more offensive than they can be to fallen man, nevertheless most mercifully responded to the demand of His apostle, making it the occasion of pronouncing a glorious promise, fitting to be rehearsed on a day like this, when we are invited to commemorate the labours and sufferings of S. Paul, and to look beyond them all to that "crown of righteousness" which is laid up for him and for all who follow in his

steps. Our Lord first assures to the twelve, of whom S. Peter spake, their thrones in the regeneration; and then, extending His promise far beyond the limit of the apostle's thoughts, promises to all who for His sake forego the hopes, the pleasures, the comforts of this life, an hundredfold more in this present time, and in the world to come everlasting life. He then tempers the brightness of this gracious declaration with the sad and sober words of warning, "But many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first."

What deep meaning must these words have possessed for Him who read the future! The throne which Judas should *not* fill was before His sight; He saw, too, the hour when Peter would account himself no less a castaway than Judas was—the hour when he would recall to mind his over-confident demand and his Lord's reply, with far other feelings than those which now possessed him. It has also been thought that reference is made in our Lord's words to the remarkable instance of him who, being last called to the apostolate, and in his own esteem "the least of all the apostles," and "not worthy to be called an apostle," because he had persecuted the Church of God, yet "laboured," as he himself asserts, "more abundantly than they all," and thus attained, in some sort, the first place among them.

Whether reference is or is not especially made to the instance of S. Paul, is but a profitless inquiry. At all events, the general truth which our Lord asserts

was remarkably exemplified in his case ; and we may, perhaps, without presumption, conclude that it was the special design of God that that humbling and salutary truth should be thus strikingly illustrated in the person of one who was an apostle of our Lord. "Lo, we have forsaken all," said S. Peter, of himself and of the other men of Galilee who were called to follow Christ—ordained "that they should be with Him"—and he spoke with truth and sincerity ; yet he was to observe hereafter the course of one for whom these words bore another meaning—of one who forsook not nets and boats on the sea of Tiberias, the toils and dangers and petty gains of a fisher's life—of one who forsook not the receipt of custom at Capernaum, which the wealthier Levi was content to forego ; but who forsook at once, for Christ's sake, the choicest treasure which, apart from Christ, a Jewish heart could know—the pride of learning, the praise of orthodoxy, the glory of zeal, that dearly bought and cherished reputation which intellectual superiority and moral worth had purchased for him with many of the most eminent of his contemporaries. It would be a hard task adequately to describe the "all" which S. Paul forsook, or might well think that he was forsaking, for Christ's sake ; but we may readily believe that S. Peter gratefully confessed, in the days of his riper knowledge, the goodness of his Divine Master, in teaching him, by the example of his fellow-apostle, to know, more

truly than he had once known, what man may consent to forego in order that he may follow Christ. "What shall we have therefore?" S. Paul asked not this question, or rather he assumed that it was already answered. "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." His aim was "to win Christ, and to be found in Him." *This* was what he sought to *have*. Yet he had, too, in a remarkable degree, what Christ had promised—"an hundredfold more in this present time." Had he lost friends? he gained more; had he forfeited the love and care of kinsfolk? others became bound to him in ties closer than those of blood. His Epistles tell us how God restored to him far more than he had lost. We read of one to whom he gave the name of "mother." Countless are his "brethren" in Christ. Nor can we doubt that he felt more than a "father's" joy in those whom he greets as "his own sons in the faith"—"in Onesimus, whom he had begotten in his bonds;" more than a father's yearning tenderness towards those "little children" whom, "in Christ Jesus, he had begotten through the gospel." S. Paul had his deep sorrows and his bitter sufferings, but, as we trace his wondrous course, and remember the widespread regions through which he was commissioned to bear the name of God, and to proclaim the blessings of the gospel of Christ, can we for a moment doubt that all which he had foregone was an hundredfold repaid?

As he thought, in his closing years, of what he purposed to have been, and of what the grace of God had made him, mark how his heart overflows with gratitude: "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen" (1 Tim. i. 17). He purposed to have been a Jew—a thoughtful, conscientious Jew—a reformer of the corrupt creed or of the corrupted morals of his countrymen; he would fain have kindled once more the expiring flame of patriotic feeling and of religious fervour among the sons of Israel. And must he not have felt most keenly how utterly hopeless was the task which he had proposed to himself; how even a partial success would probably but have precipitated the ruin of his people; and, above all, how the whole aim and effort of his life must have been directed in disastrous opposition to the sublime and gracious purposes of God? Often must he have pondered, with an ever-deepening sense of its profound import, the solemn warning once given him by the voice from heaven, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." He would feel that, even within the limits of his earthly course, he had been richly repaid; that for every hope and object which he had abandoned, a far better hope, a far nobler object had been presented; that "the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort" had provided, amidst all sorrows, reliefs and solaces which he would not consent to forego for aught which earth could offer.

But may we not look beyond the limit of the apostle's life on earth in tracing his earthly reward? Do not even men of the world oftentimes live for the future? Do not even they account the days through which their names may survive them, their memory be honoured by posterity, as a part of "this time"? And is it in itself a mistaken or unworthy instinct which prompts men to desire the kindly, loving remembrance of their fellows—to hope to live in their esteem and admiration? If, then, we thus extend the limits of "this present time," as contrasted with "the world to come," the recompense made to the faithful servant of Christ begins to take to itself a character which is indeed august, to assume a majestic grandeur. Is there any merely human remembrance in the world which we can liken to that which is left by the servants of God, among whom it has pleased Him to make the apostle whom we this day commemorate *to us* at least especially conspicuous? We might expect that the apostle of the Gentiles would secure, in a pre-eminent degree, the sympathy of the Gentile Church; and, as we may well believe, for the sake of that Church, he was moved to leave behind him written memorials far more full than those by which we have learned to know, to love, and to honour his fellow-servants.

And thus he has indeed received an hundredfold more than aught which he forsook. And, to mention

first the lowest of his honours, yet that on which the great ones of the earth prided themselves of old, and have not yet ceased to pride themselves, what material record of himself could Saul of Tarsus, or Saul the rabbi of Jerusalem, have hoped to leave? What record, to be renewed again and again, as time laid its hand upon it? May we not think that, even here, an intimation is given us of the enduring nature of Christ's kingdom, of honours dispensed by Christ, in the fact that the apostle's name and memory survive in every clime, even by means of material fabrics, in such wise      never yet the memory of hero or king has been      situated upon earth? May we not even here learn that he who loses his life for Christ's sake does indeed find it? May we not contrast with the crumbling column or the broken arch, which remains on some one spot as the memorial of human ambition, the multiplied memorials of the apostle, growing up continually in all lands, to the glory of God and to his blessed memory? It is only the holiness of the apostle's high calling, the grandeur of his aims and hopes, which gives to this portion of his recompense an aspect of insignificance, and prompts us to pass on to that which is of a more exalted character.

Be it remembered, then, that S. Paul laboured, not only for the Church of his own day, by oral teaching and by government; he wrought also for the Church

of all times, by his writings. And can we examine these writings, and fail to learn that his reward has been great indeed "in this present time"? He wrote as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, but he wrote also as he himself knew, and thought, and felt, and willed. His letters are inspired, but they are also the fruit of Christian understanding and of Christian feeling; of noble natural endowments nobly exercised; of a spirit obediently chastened by the discipline of Heaven; of a good and honest heart, which humbly and gladly yielded itself to every precious influence of divine grace. S. Paul could not have written as he did, if he had not lived as he did. His teaching is the word of God, but it is a word which had wrought itself into his very soul and life, and was thence delivered to us. And let us here devoutly recognize the freeness and liberality of God's working. Man would often work rather by instruments than by agents; he would often degrade his agents into mere instruments of his will, would avail himself of their executive capacity, while fettering the exercise of their judgment, their liberty of choice. But God condescends to be served by willing agents, ever working, indeed, in subordination to Him, yet, in some sort, doing their own work, and speaking words of their own; thus deriving an enjoyment from the service, and reaping from it a reward which could not possibly be theirs, if the consciousness of free agency, of the



spontaneous exercise, and the careful improvement of their own powers were withdrawn.

Let us take a very few of the words of the apostle for the purpose of illustrating these remarks. Not to mention how the thoughts of S. Paul are wrought into the language of our liturgical forms, let us look to some occasions of peculiar solemnity at which we avail ourselves of his express words. He stands, as it were, with our Blessed Lord Himself, and with the beloved disciple, to address to us "the comfortable words" when we are about to approach the Holy Table; and can we form an adequate conception of the power of those words, heard, as they have been, at that time, by all sorts and conditions of men, "This is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"? Surely this is one of the words of God, of which He said, "It shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

Again, he speaks to us words of strong consolation in the saddest hour which our earthly experience knows, telling us, in the presence of the dead, of the resurrection from the dead, assuring us that that which is "sown in corruption, in dishonour, and in weakness," shall be "raised in incorruption, in glory, and in power." Here, too, he stands beside His Divine Master to strengthen us, and after we have rehearsed

in our prayer that Master's words, we confess that He "hath taught us, by His holy Apostle S. Paul, not to be sorry, as men without hope, for them that sleep in Him." Nor, in these instances, is it merely the truth declared, or the exhortation given, on which our attention is to be fixed; we should mark also the *manner* of giving expression to that truth, the *manner* of enforcing that exhortation. Here the individual character appears, here intellectual or moral power is discovered, and chastened sublimity or exquisite tenderness in their turn invite us to recognize and to embrace God's sacred verity. What language can we conceive more fitted to fall upon the ear of sorrow, than that where-with he bids us comfort one another, when he reminds us that "if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him"? Can we think of the solace which these words must have conveyed for eighteen centuries to Christian mourners, and doubt that the apostle has received "an hundredfold more in this present time," even in the strong affection of those who, while they reverently and gratefully remember Him, who alone can say, "I, even I, am He that comforteth you," need not, and do not, in that remembrance forget the human voice by which they have been so tenderly counselled to take God's comfort home?

Nor let us forget another purpose which the writings of S. Paul have undoubtedly answered, and

in which he may be thought to have reaped "in this time" a most abundant harvest. Next to a sound faith, we require, in the province of speculative and contemplative religion, sober and comely language on sacred subjects; and we can have little hesitation in confessing that we are here very largely indebted to the writings of S. Paul. From all the sacred writers we have, indeed, much to learn in this regard, but from him, probably, we derive the most explicit instruction. We may observe, then, as compared with secular writers, the unambitious character of S. Paul's style, its freedom from redundant ornament. He writes as one ever conscious of a Holy Presence with him; as one who contemplates his august subject at a distance from below it. He writes as writing for it, not for himself; as striving not to disparage or discredit it, not as if it were his aim to avail himself of it for purposes of his own. It is not, indeed, to be expected that a tone like this should be equally maintained throughout writings of a character so diversified as those of S. Paul; but we may observe that, whenever he approaches holy ground, he is deeply conscious of that approach, and seems ever to hear the voice, "Draw not nigh hither." In this reserve, in this instinctive reverence, lies the main secret of the sublimity of Holy Writ; it is not by what man can say of God and of the things of God, so much as by what he abstains from saying, that he conveys to us most

powerfully his apprehension of the "terrible majesty" which he contemplates. "Our safest eloquence concerning Him" (to use the words of Hooker) "is our silence, when we confess, without confession, that His glory is inexplicable, His greatness above our capacity and reach."

Again, beyond this, we may observe on the wide field for absorbing inquiry and research which the records of the apostle present. Need we proof of this, whether in ancient or in modern times? How many have striven, how many are still striving, to unlock the treasures of divine wisdom which his writings contain! Again, how many rejoice to tread in his missionary footsteps, to track his wanderings; investing, for his sake, every city which he visited, every road by which he travelled, every physical or historical circumstance which bears upon the story of his life, with a new and higher interest.

Thus, on many different grounds, he has become a common centre of attraction to a vast company of the human race, of all ages and lands, of all orders and degrees. The weary and heavy-laden with sin, those who are bowed beneath the weight of sorrow, every son of prophecy, of exhortation or consolation—all who would ponder Christian truth, and be scribes instructed for the kingdom of heaven—turn to him alike as their guide, their comforter, their pattern, their instructor in Christ. And all this

belongs to his hundredfold recompense "in this present time."

And why has he this vast recompense? Because he left all, and followed Christ. He left all he had and all he was, so far as following Christ required it. He gave up self. There is a latent selfishness which it is indeed difficult to subdue—a selfishness which would prompt us to make even Christ ours in a bad sense, rather than to yield ourselves up to be His. Thus we may address ourselves to the study of doctrinal truths with prepossessions of our own, and so receive them only so far or in such form as may harmonize with our preconceived notions. Or, again, we may deal in like manner with moral or positive precepts, mutilating or warping them in order to adapt them to our low or perverted standard of duty. We must learn and endure to come out of ourselves, if we would truly leave all and follow Christ. In proportion as we do this may we hope, like S. Paul, to approach that central life and light of men, and to attract to ourselves in so doing more widely and more strongly the sympathies of others. It was because he did this that he speaks so generally, so effectually, to the common human heart, and binds to himself for evermore, by ties so manifold, the affections of his brethren in Christ.

And hereafter must follow the fulness of his reward—life everlasting. Suffice it for us now to

think and to speak of the time when the harvest of that recompense, which is still being sown here "in this present time," shall be gathered in in the life to come. Then shall be realized far more than S. Paul's own avowed anticipation, when he tells the Thesalonians that they are "his hope, and joy, and crown of rejoicing, in the presence of Christ at His coming." Then many another crown than that, from the east and from the west, shall be set on the apostle's brow, yet only to be cast before the throne of Him, "for the excellency of the knowledge of whom he counted all things but loss."

## SERMON IV.

PREACHED IN TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL.

*For Septuagesima Sunday.*

REVELATION xxi. 5.—“And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.”

THE first lessons for the three Sundays which immediately precede the season of Lent are chosen chiefly with the view of preparing us for that season of restraint and humiliation, by directing our thoughts to the original creation of man, to the sad story of his fall, and to the all but universal corruption of the human race, which drew down upon it the awful judgment of the flood. On this day the first lessons for the morning and the evening present to us respectively the external beauty and perfection of that creation, which, as it came from the hands of its Maker, He pronounced to be “very good;” and, again, the especial excellence of that garden of delight, in which the Lord God placed the man whom He had formed, and the moral purity and innocence of those whom He had deigned to make in His own image.

Surely, then, we may recognize the fitness with which the passages of Holy Scripture which have of late been appointed as special second lessons for the day, have been chosen with reference to the first. For the first tell us of a past happiness and perfection which have been forfeited by sin; of a primeval condition of peace and safety which are ours no longer. It is well, therefore, that, as our thoughts are directed to this past, they should not be permitted merely to revert in sadness and in shame to that present which stands in so marked a contrast with it, but that they should rather be pointed to a future in which more than the blessedness of man's original condition shall again be realized. Accordingly, some of the latest visions vouchsafed to the beloved disciple are read in our hearing. We are taught how, after the final judgment, there shall be a new creation; how this earth, which has been defiled by sin, and must, therefore, pass away, is yet not to be utterly and finally destroyed; but, as it once emerged from its judgment by water, is in like manner to emerge from its more terrible judgment by fire; that a new heaven and a new earth are to succeed the former, and to become for evermore the abode of righteousness. Is it possible that, as human beings, and far more as Christian men, we should fail to feel the profoundest interest in the disclosures which the Word of God makes to us of the origin and of the final destiny of man and of his dwell-



ing-place? Can we fail to be thankful that "the ignorant present," which had been otherwise so destitute of hope and joy, has been thus enlightened by visions of original glory, and of a yet greater glory to be revealed at the last? Must we not also feel how deeply we need the revelations of the future to interpret the past and the present; how little it would profit us, or rather how it must but aggravate our wretchedness, to be told, apart from these gracious disclosures of God's future purposes, of an Eden from which man had been banished, of a moral integrity which he had lost? Surely we may sympathize with our Christian poet, when he thus closes his meditation on "the restitution of all things"—

" Thus heavenward all things tend ; for all were made  
Perfect, and all shall be at length restored.  
So God hath greatly purposed, who would else,  
In His dishonoured works, Himself endure  
Dishonour, and be wronged without redress."

How marvellously, moreover, are the revelations of Holy Scripture, on these subjects, accommodated to our present moral and spiritual need ! They awaken the liveliest hope, the most exalted anticipations, while they leave us in a humbling, yet most salutary, uncertainty as to the conditions of that future state. S. Paul tells us that he heard in Paradise "unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for man to utter," and we may believe that none but "unspeakable words,"

which it is alike impossible for man to utter or to apprehend, could give distinct and definite expression to the wonders of the future. The language in which Holy Scripture whispers of these wonders to us is for the most part negative, abstracting, from our dim vision of that world unseen, every conception of physical or moral evil, everything which stains, or saddens, or disquiets our existence in this present life. Or, if the language be positive, it assures us, in terms most general, of blessings and glories too vast to be distinctly realized; or, again, it shadows forth these blessings and glories under material images, in which we rest only because we know them to be *but* images, parables which fain would aid us faintly to apprehend the invisible, unutterable reality.

"He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." What a limitless range do not these words leave to our conceptions of that new creation; more especially as the word which is translated "new" signifies that which is new in *kind*, not merely in *age*. The heaven and the earth which are now are not to be reproduced again, nor is another heaven and another earth like them to be created; the heaven and the earth to which the Almighty shall then give being, will be such as never yet met the sight of man or of angel, such as must transcend all our thoughts.

Let us reflect on the intimations which Holy Scripture gives us of the vast change which shall

have taken place in those "who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead." S. Paul tells us that He, for whom "we look from heaven as our Saviour, shall change the body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto the body of His glory;" and, again, he argues that, as the seed sown by man is not the body that shall be, so, too, the human body, which is laid in the dust, differs as widely at least from the body which shall be raised, as does the seed from the plant which springs from it.

Let us reflect, too, with all reverence, on the several appearances, after His ascension, of that Son to whose image it is the will of God to conform those "who are the called according to His purpose," and we must at once perceive how very feebly we, of necessity, apprehend the import of the apostle's words, "we shall be *changed*."

If man, then, is to undergo this change—to be, even in respect of the body, "a new creation"—does not this at once suggest a corresponding change in respect of his abiding dwelling-place, which we are told "shall remain before God"? As we muse, therefore, alike with awe and hope, on the wondrous purposes of God in respect of ourselves, confessing that "it doth not yet appear what we shall be," and only deepening the solemnity which that confession inspires, by the recollection that "we know that we shall be like Him,

for we shall see Him as He is ;" even so, with the like awe and hope, must we muse on the wondrous purposes of God respecting our destined habitation. Is this earth, even now, in modes so diversified, formed by Divine power and wisdom and beneficence, to minister not only to the manifold necessities of man, but to his delight and improvement—not merely to his physical enjoyment, but to the cultivation of his intellectual powers, and of his moral sentiments and affections ; has even the sin of man, and the disorder which that sin has introduced, been forbidden to do more than *impair* the exquisite adaptation of external nature to the physical and intellectual and moral constitution of man ? And shall not the new heavens and the new earth be most marvellously enriched with every grace and treasure, which may render them subservient to the highest well-being of man, when he shall be not merely restored to the primeval sonship of Adam, but exalted to a far higher sonship in Him who is the firstborn among many brethren ?

Let us look, then, with all seriousness, at the history of our race, as it is this day presented to us, in its origin and in its ultimate issue. We know, alas, but too well, what man is become by sin ; let us think, with all seriousness, of what God made him at the first, and of the condition to which it is His gracious purpose to exalt him hereafter and for ever. We cannot, if we would, succeed in putting these thoughts

from us altogether ; they concern us individually most deeply, and will at times appeal to us importunately for entertainment.

We have received our wondrous being, this human nature, from the hands of God ; we are, by nature, involved in the first man's fall ; we are, by God's abundant grace, admitted to partake in the recovery from that fall, which has been wrought by the second Adam. As we cannot separate ourselves from the past, so have we an interest, alike awful and most hopeful, in the future. God would have the individual history of each one amongst us to be an epitome, as of the ruin, so of the blessed restoration of our race ; and accordingly we must, if we would truly realize our obligations as moral and responsible beings, alike take to ourselves the shame and sorrow of the past, and embrace the blessed hope which is set before us.

Let us ask of God, then, to teach us, with all humble and contrite gratitude, to rejoice in His gracious word, " Behold, I make all things new." It is His purpose that we should live hereafter in a far higher, a far nobler life than the present ; that we should move upon an earth and look up to a heaven which shall far more wondrously " declare His glory " and " show His handiwork " than those which our eyes now behold. He has thus graciously designed to admit us to a far higher sphere of existence, and to provide for us a far more exalted abode.

Let us, too, remember that the voice which is at the last to go forth from the throne of God, "Behold, I make all things new," has, in a certain sense, long since been uttered, and that with power. God's new creation is not a thing simply future; it is a work already begun. We shall do well to note how Holy Scripture employs the selfsame terms to denote alike the beginning and the consummation of this blessed work of restoration. Our Lord speaks of the time when He shall hereafter sit on the throne of His glory, as "*the regeneration*;" yet regeneration is a gift not simply future, for ever since the redeeming work of our Lord was perfected by His death, resurrection, and ascension, men have been saved, in Him, "by the laver of *regeneration*." So, again, S. Paul represents the whole creation, and even them, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, together with it, as waiting, with painful expectation, "for the *adoption*, to wit, the redemption of our body;" yet there is an *adoption*, which they who are Christ's have already received, in Him.

So, again, S. Peter tells us of a "last time, in which *salvation* is ready to be revealed," for which salvation Christians are now being "kept by the power of God through faith;" yet *salvation* is spoken of, in passages innumerable, as a benefit already received. And so, once more, our Lord Himself says, speaking of the time of His second coming, "When these things begin

to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your *redemption* draweth nigh;" yet we are told that "Christ *hath redeemed* us from the curse of the law," and that "we *were not redeemed* with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ."

Yet here are no contradictions or discrepancies; for regeneration, and adoption, and salvation, and redemption, are merciful processes of grace, even now taking effect upon the nature of man, which are yet to be consummated hereafter.

And most deeply does it concern us all to note the method by which it has pleased Almighty God to work in our restoration—how and where the blessed work begins, what portion of our complex nature is first affected by it. Our life, as Christians upon earth, could be in no sense a time of probation were God's order changed; we could not possibly, so far as we can understand, be subjected to that gracious discipline, whereby the true likeness to our Lord is to be wrought within us, if our redemption were at once bestowed in all its fulness. If in the instance of our Blessed Lord Himself suffering was of necessity to precede, and on it the glory was to follow, how could we possibly look to tread another path than His, and to inherit the rich external blessing before we had been taught to cherish and hold fast the precious inward birthright? So are we made here the sons

of God-sons "for the manifestation of whom the earnest expectation of the creature" must "wait" until the end of all things.

We are here called to bear within ourselves the priceless treasure of adoption, while the outward man presents to the world no token of our possession of this privilege. It is in mind, in soul, in spirit, that the Divine image is first to be renewed. This portion of the great work belongs to this present time; and however this "creation in Christ Jesus unto good works" may contain within itself even now the germ and the sure pledge of the complete renewal which is hereafter to be realized, yet that perfect consummation can find no place below. The good fight must first be fought, the course finished, the faith kept unto the end. Nor, even then, shall the hour have come. "The souls of the faithful are," indeed, "after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, in joy and felicity with God;" but till the number of His elect is accomplished, the "eternal and everlasting glory" is not revealed.

Let us ever cherish the remembrance of the voice which *has* surely gone forth—"the voice of the Lord, mighty in operation;" "the voice of the Lord," which is "a glorious voice." Let us strive to realize the sacred name which that voice has named upon us; let us strive to prove ourselves faithful members of Christ, loving and obedient children of God, heirs.



through a hope deeply and habitually cherished, of His everlasting kingdom. If our *present* salvation becomes to us a reality—a thing believed, experienced, recognized with growing interest, with deeper thankfulness—then shall we be learning from day to day to anticipate, with livelier expectation, the future and complete salvation, both in body and soul, which shall be revealed in the great day, when He that sitteth upon the throne shall speak His final word of power. “Behold, I make all things new.” Then “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things shall have passed away.”

## SERMON V.

PREACHED IN TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL.

*For Quinquagesima Sunday.*

1 CORINTHIANS xiii. 13.—“And now abideth faith, hope, charity.  
these three ; but the greatest of these is charity.”

S. PAUL, in reproving the exaggerated opinion which many members of the Corinthian Church entertained respecting the importance of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit and the ill-judged and disorderly exhibition which they made at times of those gifts, very seasonably and impressively directs their attention to other gifts of God in Christ, which they had not learned to esteem as they ought ; and, after his inimitable description of the crowning grace of love, which we have heard in the Epistle for this day, he points out the transitory nature of the gifts which so engrossed the admiration of the Church at Corinth, and the enduring, abiding character of those moral graces which were held by it in comparatively small esteem.

“ Faith, and hope, and charity *abide*,” says he in

the text. It has been questioned what kind of permanence the apostle assigns to these graces; whether he means that they are to endure for ever, or whether he speaks only of their abiding with us throughout the whole course of the Church's warfare upon earth. His language is, perhaps, intentionally obscure, as the Church may not have been prepared in his day to contemplate the cessation of miraculous powers and the withdrawal of extraordinary gifts; and it is probable that, to those to whom his Epistle was primarily addressed, the abiding character of the three great Christian virtues, as distinguished from miraculous gifts, would have indicated that they, and they alone, should remain in a higher state when "that which is perfect" should have "come," and when they should see "face to face." Interpreters of Holy Scripture, however, living after the cessation of miraculous gifts, have not unnaturally argued that faith, and hope, and love are described as abiding with the Church only until the end of her earthly warfare; and they have observed that in the life to come faith and hope can have no place, faith being lost in sight, and "the hope that is seen" being no longer hope, and, accordingly, that the love, of which the apostle had said above that it "never faileth," can alone abide for ever. We may readily acquiesce in this interpretation as being practically correct, for in the life to come the primary objects of our *present*

faith will be realized to them that shall have endured unto the end. The great things for which the Christian is taught to hope here will then, in some sort at least, be his in possession; he will be invited to *enjoy* rather than to *expect*, to *behold* rather than to *believe*.

We should, however, be careful to observe that the apostle by no means affirms here that faith and hope will ever absolutely cease. We must bear in mind that our popular language on this point cannot be regarded as expressing anything more than a pious opinion, or a statement which is true relatively to our present more immediate objects of faith and hope. Holy Scripture nowhere tells us that it is possible for a created being *absolutely* to cease from the exercise of faith and hope in the Infinite Creator; and we know that some great teachers of the Church have regarded these graces as abiding, by a moral necessity, for ever. We are told by one that "man must ever be looking to God with trust and hope, looking evermore to receive somewhat more from Him, inasmuch as He is good, and has riches inexhaustible, and a kingdom without end, and instruction without limit." \*

We shall not, then, be justified in assuming, as the reason for the superiority of love over faith and hope, that the former is eternal, while the latter are not so. Whatever sense we may assign to the word "abideth"

\* Irenæus, ii., xlvii. (or xxviii.), 3.

in the text, whether we regard it as denoting a limited or an unlimited continuance, such continuance, be it what it may, is affirmed of the three virtues alike; and while that equality in respect of duration is affirmed, love is yet said to be the greater.

Let us ask, then, wherein consists the superiority of love. Surely in this, that, while the other graces may be regarded as the root and stem, love is the flower or the fruit. Love is the consummation of faith and hope; *they* exist for the sake of love, not *love* for their sake. Let us inquire how this is, remembering that love, which is the fulfilling of the law, is the love both of God and of man. First, then, love towards God is the consummation of faith and hope in God, and therefore greater than they. This may readily be seen. Do we *believe* in God—in His great goodness to us, in His merciful purposes concerning us? and, again, do we so recognize our dependence upon Him, our interest in His purposes concerning us, as that our faith awakens *hope* within us, and teaches us to *desire*, as well as to *trust*, God's promises? Do we not, under these conditions, feel that God requires of us, and that we, for our own happiness, must yield to Him, something more, something better, than faith and hope; that the one is but a barren intellectual act, destitute of any moral excellence whatever, that the other is but a selfish longing for our own good, till love breathes

into them its celestial spirit, and clothes them with its heavenly light, binding us to our Great Maker and Benefactor by its sacred bond, and teaching us, by the grace of that Holy Spirit, whose gift it is, to cry, "Abba, Father"?

Whether we look to the glory of God or to the happiness of man, we must undoubtingly admit that, while faith, hope, and charity ever abide in all our intercourse with heaven, the greatest of these is charity.

But, again, if we regard charity as the love of our brethren, here also we may perceive that it is the result of faith and hope—their glorious development, their excellent fruit. As faith and hope in God lead to love for God, so are faith and hope in God the only sure foundation, the only unfailing source of Christian love towards men. Belief in our Father in Christ can alone teach us love for our brethren in Christ. The faith and hope which bring us home to God, bring us near to one another; in Him we see ourselves akin to each other, and we discern also the sacred nature of this relationship, the awful responsibilities which are involved in it.

It is our apprehension of the relation in which God has consented to stand to man which alone discovers to us our real relation to each other. We must learn to say, "Our Father," ere we can say, "We are brethren." And if, again, we look from the

Father to the Son, from Him to whom we have been brought nigh to Him who brought us nigh, and observe how He exemplified, in His human nature and in His life on earth, the love which we ought to bear towards the brethren, does it not most clearly appear that our faith in Christ, our hope in Him, are indeed the very root and source of all Christian charity? We are instructed that Christ, our Redeemer and our Life, loved not in our poor imperfect manner—loving, as we naturally do, for our own petty ends, not for the sake of the person loved; choosing a few, in respect of whom we may indulge the delight of affection or of friendship; not exhibiting to the many an impartial and self-denying charity. We are taught that He loved all, sought the good of all; that He loved the helpless, the ignorant, the dull, the wayward, the ungrateful, the sordid; that He loved all, because they were men whom God willed to be saved; loved all, not from complacency in what they were, but for what His love might make them. Where shall we learn a wide and profound philanthropy, if not from the example and from the doctrine of Christ? And are not, then, our faith and hope in Him the living and effectual source of love towards man? Again, if we look to Christian charity, as it was discovered in the conduct of the apostles of Christ, do we not see that it was a new outgrowth from a new faith and hope, to which men had been

begotten in Him? What was the principle of that love which S. Paul discovered towards his unbelieving and persecuting brethren according to the flesh, towards his erring and ungrateful children in the gospel, save the faith of which he spoke when he said, "I know whom I have believed," the hope of which he said, "We were saved by hope"?

But, again, we may observe another mode in which faith and hope are subservient to the development of Christian charity. Without this faith and hope man is poor indeed, and feels miserably the narrowing, hardening results of his indigence. He cannot, as he thinks, afford to love his neighbour as himself; he must not permit his ease to be disquieted, his means impaired, his time engrossed, his purposes deranged, by a regard to the necessities of others. Who is so utterly, so systematically selfish, as the man who puts from him deliberately the faith and hope of the gospel, and strives to exist on the wretched faiths and hopes which are to be found elsewhere? But let a man cordially embrace the promises of God in Christ, and his heart is at once enlarged; he begins to understand something of the meaning of the wondrous words, "All things are yours," to have some conception of treasures which are not impaired but augmented by being shared with others; and he feels that, with these treasures in prospect, he may well be content to relinquish



present hopes and interests, or rather that he *must* make the great future sure, by trading with the present for his Lord's glory and for his brother's good.

Christian faith and hope are, then, the root, the source, the spring of love to God and of love to man. Throughout our course on earth there abide with us, in the Church of God, these three precious gifts of faith, hope, and charity; but the greatest of these is charity. And, if this be so, how careful should we be to seek the possession of that crowning grace, to which the others stand in the relation of means to an end! We often say, "I *believe* in God"—we may, perhaps, sincerely avow that we have *hope* in God—but do we not feel that it is something far more to speak or to think of *loving* God?

Yet, what is faith without love but a dead faith? and what is hope without love but a selfish, earthly hope? Is it not, indeed, a fearful thing to believe God's truth without love of Him, to hope, without love of God, for God's mercy? There would seem to be in faith and in hope, even when directed to heavenly objects, both an earthly and a heavenly element; but Christian love is wholly from above. If faith and hope result in love, love makes them spiritual and heavenly; but if love be wanting, they are but of the earth, earthly.

But, again, how careful should we be to seek the

grace of love towards man! It is possible that we should say in our hearts, "I love God," and yet be deceiving ourselves, because we love not man. Let us never forget the heart-searching words of S. John, "He that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also." There is deep wisdom here. The love of man is first spoken of, as if it must lead the way to the love of God; and, again, the love of God is recognized as the source of the love of man. Is it that the imperfect, unformed love of man first leads us upward towards the love of God, and then that the love of God teaches us to love man far more, far better? There is a wondrous law of reciprocation here, and nature and grace seem both to have their part in the mystery. Grace purifies and elevates our natural earthly affections, and through them leads us up to the love of God; and then the love of God and the knowledge of God, which that love alone can give, teach us in turn the highest and the purest love for man. Nor let us forget that the duties prescribed by the first and the second tables of the law are thus inseparably blended and knit together; for a man may *say*, "I love God," and it may be nothing more than *saying*: but let him love his brother for God's sake, and then it is love indeed, both for God and for man. So, with

a glance heavenward, with a consciousness of God, with a remembrance of the Redeemer and of His great work for man, a patient *thought* respecting another, a kind *word* uttered in forbearance, a kind *act* done, hoping for nothing again, is the best token which we can give that we love God. The second commandment is like unto the first. The first must teach us how to keep the second, and then, in keeping the second, we shall be surely keeping the first. God must be loved with all our heart, and then man as ourselves, because God with all our heart. "He that loveth God must love his brother also."

Thus, then, is love the outgrowth of faith and hope, and so the greatest of the three—the end and perfection of the other two. And, if this be so, we need not too curiously inquire whether faith and hope are to be regarded as pertaining exclusively to the kingdom of grace, or as having their place also in the kingdom of glory. For, in the latter case, love must yet ever be increasing, while faith and hope still minister to her; love ever receiving, whilst they enrich her by their virtue; love ever widening her domain, while theirs is narrowing. Faith will again and again see her objects realized; hope will be again and again fulfilled; while love will still say, "It is finished," and delight herself in the majesty and beneficence of God. And so, perchance, it may be for ever, faith evermore becoming more assured and hope more buoyant, as

love waxes mighty and makes them, in their turn, drink into her spirit.

Or, perchance, there may be a time, like that which was once on the Mount of Transfiguration, when the Incarnate Love Himself was seen in glory, with Moses and Elias, types of the faith and hope of earlier days; but "when the voice was past," the two who had talked with Him, who had ministered to Him and had prepared His way, were seen no more, and "Jesus was found alone." Even so the two lesser virtues may some time disappear, no more place being found for them, and love alone remain, their fulfilment and their perfection, rejoicing in the finishing of the mystery of God, in the lifting of the last veil, in the accomplishment of the uttermost promise.

## SERMON VI.

PREACHED IN TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL.

*For the First Sunday in Lent.*

GENESIS xix. 14.—“But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law.”

“SEARCH the Scriptures” was our Lord’s emphatic admonition to the Jews, who knew indeed those Scriptures, yet knew them not; knew them as the oracles of God delivered to their fathers, to be treasured with pride and regarded with reverence, yet knew them not as the result of patient and humble inquiry respecting the mysteries which they commend to man’s faith, and the duties which they prescribe for his observance. The more we acquaint ourselves with the Word of God, the more shall we be assured that it is a record to be *searched*, not only because it contains invaluable truths, but also because it contains very much truth, many a lesson of godly wisdom, which will by no means yield itself up to the feeble effort of the superficial and listless inquirer. Care and close attention are, indeed, often required in the study of

other books; but the object of an ordinary writer is to make his meaning at once patent and obvious to all; and more especially do writers of narrative or history involuntarily, as it were, call attention to the motives which they suppose to have influenced the conduct of those of whom they write, and to the results which have followed from that conduct. Nothing is more natural than to suggest the *moral* of the drama as its course is traced, and to commend to the reader the great lessons which its events should teach them. Here it is that the Word of God differs remarkably from other writings. While the aim of its narratives is pre-eminently moral teaching, it yet generally leaves the application to its readers; and, moreover, it often leaves them also to collect or to infer the facts from which that application is to be deduced. Such is the case in the instance before us. The text tells us that when Lot warned his sons-in-law of the approaching overthrow of Sodom, "he seemed unto them as one that mocked;" and it will readily appear that the lesson which we are to learn from the fact here stated will depend very materially on the estimate which we form of the characters both of the speaker and of those to whom he addressed himself. One very important question is, "Where did the fault lie?"—how came it to pass that so solemn a warning was so utterly fruitless? If the fault were on one side only, the admonitory teaching of the text is not so pregnant as

it will prove to be, if the sad result were the consequence of error on both sides; and, again, if the sons-in-law of Lot are alone to blame, the lesson to be learnt from their awful calamity will differ greatly, and demand a widely different application, as we adopt different views of their character and of the principles by which they were governed. Of Lot himself the Old Testament records very little which would enable us to form a favourable estimate of his character; the circumstances to his advantage being his accompanying Abraham from Haran to the land of promise; his hospitality, as it was discovered in his urgent appeal to the angels to take shelter beneath his roof; and his noble courage, proved by his resolution to protect them in that asylum from insult and injury. The Scriptures of the New Testament, however, teach us to attribute to him excellence of a higher character. They speak of him as "just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked;" they declare that "that righteous man dwelling among them, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds" (2 Peter ii. 7, 8); and we must consequently infer that, when he followed the footsteps of his great relative, he did so in a spirit akin to his—that he had resolved to cling to one whom God had singled out from among mankind to be the depositary of His truth and of His promises; and that when, subsequently, in an evil hour, he broke off his more intimate relations with Abraham, he still

retained his allegiance to the God of Abraham, resolving to serve Him, though in the midst of grievous and self-chosen temptations, which could not but embitter his life, if they did not undermine his constancy, or taint the purity of his moral principles and perceptions.

We see in Lot, therefore, a good man, who had unhappily consented to assume and to retain a position of great spiritual danger—not merely distressing to himself, but most prejudicial to his influence for good with others, who could but ill appreciate the strife within him, between the spirit of holy faith and obedience which he had never ceased to retain, and those far lower and unworthy motives under the influence of which he was induced to imperil all which he held most precious. He was a holy and a righteous man, yet was he one of whom it might be readily inferred that he made no great account of holiness and righteousness; and, consequently, he was one who could not, with powerful effect, commend holiness and righteousness to others.

And of the sons-in-law of Lot what estimate are we to form? All that we know of them directly is, that they regarded Lot “as one that mocked” when he warned them of the impending destruction of Sodom, and we may hence infer that they had but little sympathy with Lot’s better nature, that they were not so keenly grieved at sin as he was, not so prepared as he was, by the forebodings of conscience,



to give ear to the tidings of its impending punishment. It must be remembered, also, that the evidence on which Lot had given credence to the solemn communication which the angels had made to him, might have furnished to these men also sufficient grounds for receiving his testimony. Though they were not eye-witnesses of the supernatural occurrences of which Lot was personally cognizant, they might yet have readily satisfied themselves of their truth; and, indeed, it can scarcely be imagined that some rumour of the judgment inflicted by the heavenly visitants should have failed to reach their ears. They could have had, therefore, but little in common with their father-in-law, viewed as the righteous man, the servant of God. They would look upon the strange things that had come to pass with other eyes than his. On the other hand, we should probably be guilty of a very serious error in classing them with the profane and dissolute inhabitants of the city in which they dwelt. Lot, we may well believe, would not have consented to receive into his family men who bore the fearful impress of the place; and beside this, we may observe that the angels purposed to save them, mentioning them expressly in the announcement of their merciful intent; and, again, it would appear that Abraham, in his intercessory prayer, ventured to include these men in the number of the ten righteous who, as he hoped, might be found in Sodom. They were not, then, open

or grievous offenders; they would rank, in man's regard, with the comparatively virtuous family of Lot, rather than with the corrupt mass around them. Let us ask, then, how it came to pass that they received Lot's message as they did? And first, from what fault in themselves? We may safely assume that Lot's great error had been an undue devotion to his worldly interests: and is it not most natural that, in the case of those whom his example and advice had probably restrained from flagrant offences, his own great defect of character should be reproduced in an aggravated form; that, imbibing from him much which was good, they should too surely imbibe that inordinate love of wealth, that devotion to secular advancement, which had been suffered to warp the whole course of his life, and to rob it alike of its comfort and of its honour? With him it was, apparently, a superinduced disease of mature life, which did not fatally overgrow his higher and purer principles of action; but with them it would be a second nature, unconsciously adopted at a very early age, and never brought into marked antagonism with higher hopes and fears, as no doubt it must have been in the case of one who, like Lot, had enjoyed the society, and had been instructed by the example of Abraham. We see, then, in these men, decent, respectable men of the world; not vicious men or men of violence, but pre-eminently *worldly* men—men whose

belief was that there was a God who made them to live *here*, to acquire and enjoy the good things of this life, to propose to themselves honourable earthly aims or lawful temporal gratifications—men who were quite content with, quite absorbed in, the present; who had chosen deliberately not to look beyond the present until they had lost the power of doing so.

The sons-in-law of Lot could, no doubt, have given very weighty reasons for the strong, absorbing interest which they took in the plain of Jordan. That which was “as the garden of the Lord” was no doubt an earthly Paradise to them: of those who bought, and sold, and planted, and builded in those days, they were probably neither the least enterprising nor the least successful.

How very strange, then, how very unwelcome, amid the grateful recollections of past prosperity, the allurements of present enjoyment, the anticipations of future exertion and advancement, must have been the sudden announcement of Lot, that God was about to overwhelm, in utter ruin, the treasure-house of all their possessions, the scene of all their delights, the field of all their hopeful enterprises; and that His special mercy was inviting them to escape for their lives, and go forth, with thankful alacrity, as comfortless and destitute wanderers. Could any man have believed this message if he were not most deeply persuaded of God's moral government of the world,

of man's probation here, of the subserviency of the material to the moral creation, and thus of the awful probability that even the enchanting scene before them, enriched alike by nature and by the art and industry of man, might be made a perpetual desolation, for the wickedness of them that dwelt therein? Let us ask ourselves whether we know nothing of this unbelieving spirit of the world which was discovered by the sons-in-law of Lot. No great wonder was it that men such as we have supposed them to be should have been incapable of receiving that strange word of warning and threatening; far more cause is there for wonder that the same temper of mind should teach men to refuse also those words of God which address themselves to our hopes rather than to our fears; which tell us of His abundant mercy, not of His dread displeasure. Yet the worldly spirit, the carnal mind, rejects *all* truth which lies beyond its own narrow sphere. Man was made, it suggests, for time, for this world, for present aims and occupations, and beyond this it will not consent to look. This little life is all in all to it. It conceives it to be an aim, fully commensurate with man's faculties and with man's aspirations, that he should seek to amass and enjoy a splendid fortune, to make himself a great name by talent or by courage, to secure for himself the possession of power or the distinctions of rank; all these unsubstantial and unstable advantages, or things even

far less substantial, less enduring, than these, are regarded as the realities which man is to prize and to pursue; and so any teaching of God's Word which is incompatible with this narrow and purblind estimate of man's duty and interest, any doctrine which points to a higher destiny hereafter, to a higher rule of life here, is regarded but as a delusive dream, and he who would venture to become its exponent, seems, to the votary of the world, but "as one that mocketh."

And here we are liable to be greatly deceived by the *passive* assent which the majority of mankind give, under existing circumstances, to Christian truth. They recognize externally that which they do not by any means believe; they consent not to deny truths on the belief of which they would never consent to act. Thus a man may attend the services of the Church, may even partake of her sacraments, while there is not in reality any article of the Christian faith which he is prepared to admit in its doctrinal and practical application to himself. These truths lie far beyond the range of his vision, the scope of his philosophy; they stand in marked contrast to those shadows which he accounts to be realities; and therefore, awful realities though they be, they are to him but empty shadows. He can scarcely believe that they are more than shadows to any other intelligent being; he would not lightly charge guileless men with conscious hypocrisy; but, at all events, they seem to

him "as one that mocketh" when they seriously urge upon him the duty of embracing Christian doctrines, or of obeying the precepts of Christ.

But, again, had Lot nothing with which to reproach himself when he failed to persuade his sons-in-law to leave Sodom? They were themselves ill prepared to receive his message, but was he prepared efficiently to communicate it? The word of warning might have fallen on a closed ear, but was it uttered by an unfaltering tongue? They might not, they probably would not, have listened had Abraham spoken; but could they so lightly, so complacently, have rejected *his* message? Must they not have admitted, had he spoken, that he was acting at least a consistent part, crowning at length, by a final announcement of impending destruction, many a word of foreboding apprehension which he had uttered before? If he had said to them before, "I should dread to live where you are living;" "I should fear both the sin which you witness and the punishment which must follow it;" "Will the bolt spare your heads if you choose to dwell in the midst of those at whom it must be levelled?"—if he had spoken thus before—and thus he might naturally and consistently have spoken—then might he also have said at the last, with all the cogent earnestness of honest conviction, "Go forth at once, for God has shown me that the vengeance, so long expected, is now at hand."

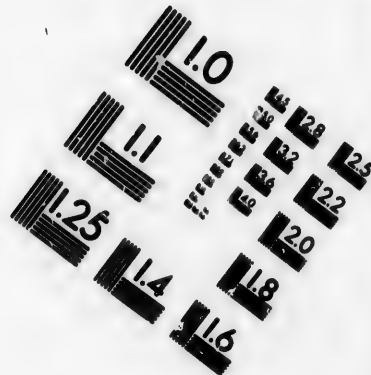
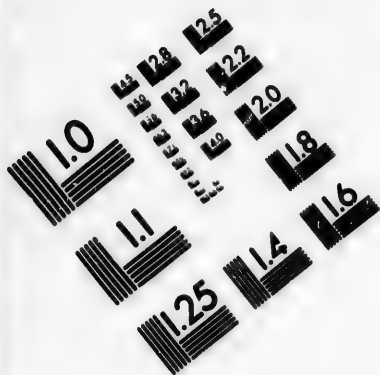
But Lot could not, in past days, possibly have spoken thus. If he had his fears that the signal wickedness of the cities of the plain must provoke some signal punishment, he must have suppressed those fears, for they would have condemned his continued sojourn in a place which he felt to be a special object of the divine displeasure. Such fears must have told him that he was tempting God, by asking or expecting His protection while he himself chose not to consult his own safety ; and, accordingly, he must have silenced these unwelcome apprehensions, refusing to listen to them himself, and, consequently, absolutely precluded from even whispering them to others. So far as others were aware, he would have known no such fear ; no gloomy apprehension would ever have crossed his mind until, on this fatal night, as his sons-in-law might imagine, the violence to which he had been exposed had utterly unnerved him, and had induced him to conceive that some fearful catastrophe must be at hand. Lot's voluntary sojourn for many years in Sodom, his return thither after his captivity—which captivity he might well have interpreted as a divine monition to depart—had robbed his testimony on this occasion of the weight which would otherwise have attached to it. The mercy which vouchsafed to bring him forth out of the overthrow was a strange, unlooked-for mercy ; and so far as he felt that he had ill deserved this forbearance of God—

that he had placed himself well-nigh beyond the reach of this merey—so far also must he have felt that he was sadly disqualified to bear to his sons-in-law the strange tidings that it was God's purpose forthwith to destroy the city, but to make for himself and for them a way of escape out of the terrible overthrow.

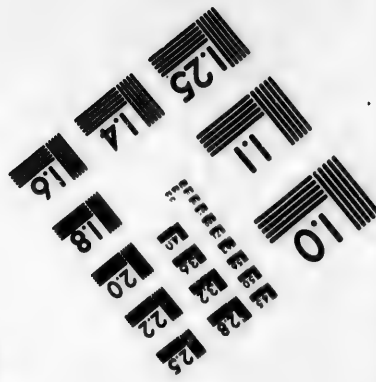
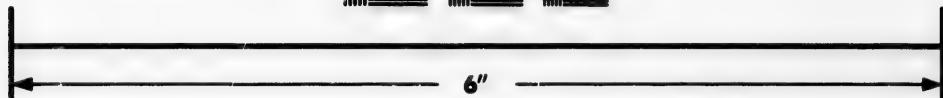
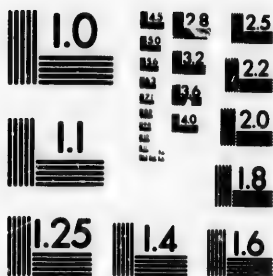
Let us, then, take this lesson home to ourselves. There are times at which we have to speak solemn words in God's behalf. Any one of us may be called upon to do so again and again. It may become our duty to appeal to the conscience of some grievous offender, to endeavour to check a course of sin in its commencement. We may have occasion to warn the sick or the dying of their highest duty, to present to them their only hope, to set before them the sad grounds which exist in their case both for grief and for fear. We may be called upon to feel the trembling anxiety which Lot must have felt when he went forth, in the darkness of that last night on which the stars were to look down on Sodom, to carry to his sons-in-law a message, on their reception of which their life or death—how much more than their life or death?—depended. And may we not too easily go forth, as he did, ill prepared to give utterance to the word which God would have us speak; ill fitted to procure, from the hearts of others, admittance for unwelcome truth; inadequate to the burden of some momentous message which may not be duly borne







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save by one whom God has strengthened for the task, who is girded with such might as can result only from loving obedience, from "patient continuance in well-doing"? Can we effectually exhort others to receive truths which we do not ourselves cherish, or to practise duties which we ourselves fail to observe? Will not men too readily mark the inconsistency, we might almost say the incoherence, of the language in which we attempt to address them; and earnest as we may be at the moment to convince and to persuade, shall we not nevertheless seem to them "as one that mocketh"?

This duty may devolve, as I have said, on any of us. Times will come, in the providence of God, when friends and relatives must be under an obligation to discharge, in respect of each other, such offices of Christian charity; but more especially should the ministers of God's Holy Word and sacraments, whose official position demands of them continually the exercise of these offices towards their fellow-men, be ever on their guard, lest aught in their conduct in the world should cast a suspicion upon their sincerity, and lead men to doubt whether they are themselves possessed by a profound persuasion of the truth of Christian doctrines and of the solemnity of religious obligations. Nor let us forget that there is such a thing as a man's seeming *to himself* "as one that mocketh" in the discharge of holy duties, in the

expression of Christian feeling, in the inculcation of Christian faith or Christian practice. And a man must know something of this wretched self-distrust, of this miserable self-contempt, so long as he neglects, humbly and perseveringly, to seek the blessing of "an honest and good heart," of "simplicity and godly sincerity."

The official character should be *grafted* on the personal, not merely *attached* to it; there should be a living coherence between the one and the other. It is the *man* who is to serve God in the priest's office; it is the Christian *man* who is to be clothed with the peculiar authority and privilege which appertain to the ministerial function; it is the man, in body, soul, and spirit, who is to be fitted, by a special gift of God, to serve Him in the ministry of His Church. And except the man be, through God's grace, prepared to render this service, then must he too often sadly feel that, in the discharge of sacred duties, he is in his own eyes, and in the eyes of men—alas! in other eyes than those of men—"as one that mocketh."

Pray we, then, that God may evermore preserve us from following the evil example of the sons-in-law of Lot by yielding ourselves up to the deadening influence of a worldly, carnal mind, to that "hardness of heart and contempt of God's Word and commandment" which must be the inevitable, though it may

be in some cases the latent, result of inordinate devotion to the interests of this present life.

Let us also entreat God to spare us such bitter sorrow and shame as Lot must have felt when he saw how utterly powerless were his warnings and entreaties—such bitter sorrow and shame as must follow from inconsistency of conduct, from habitually trifling with convictions of duty ; remembering ever that one most obvious and most painful consequence of such inconsistency will be the loss of that influence for good which we ought to possess with others—a miserable incapacity to benefit them in matters which we yet feel to be of the highest moment.

And more especially if we are set in the ministry of Christ's Church, or are seeking to be called to that ministry, let us seriously reflect on the pitiable condition of the man who comes with enfeebled hands, with irresolute, unquiet spirit, to the discharge of holy functions, conscious of a grievous discrepancy between his official and his personal character, disheartened by the secret conviction that he is not doing God service with good will, and "heavy and displeased" under the apprehension that this must also be open to the observation of others.

## SERMON VII.

PREACHED IN TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL.

*For the Second Sunday in Lent.*

HEBREWS xii. 17.—“Ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.”

THERE is no actor, in the scene of sorrow and righteous retribution recorded in the first lesson for this morning, from whose faults and sufferings we may not derive most salutary warning. We may turn alike to Isaac, to Jacob, or to Esau, and recognize the divine wisdom, which has left us on the sacred page no tale which may merely awaken our sympathies or excite our interest, but a story “common to man,” pregnant with deep instruction, fraught with counsels and cautions of universal import. The characters portrayed in Holy Scripture are, generally speaking, types of large classes of mankind; and I believe it may be said that they are so universally, in those instances in which they are delineated in detail.

Some marvellous enigmatical character may serve to add zest to the page of fiction; but in the Word of God, written for our learning, the beauty as well as the utility of the narrative consists in its being so simply true to nature, so unerring a reflection of the common sins and infirmities of our fallen humanity.

Esau's is a character which all must recognize, alike by its defects and by its excellences. A very little knowledge of mankind will teach us how frequently these are combined in the same individual; how those good natural gifts which Esau enjoyed are prone to be misused, as he misused them; how they too often become the occasion of inducing those grievous errors into which he fell. With many qualities of body and of mind which would commend him to the admiration of others, and which had, as it would seem, secured to him the partial affection of his father, he had yet grown up, to all appearance, as irreligious a man as we can well conceive a member of Isaac's household to have been. If we recall to mind the history of that family—Abraham's separation from his idolatrous kinsfolk, his frequent and intimate communion with Heaven, and all the wondrous circumstances which had conspired to mark his chosen son as the depository of God's promises and of the hopes of the world; if we reflect how the circumstances of Isaac's birth, and of his marvellous deliverance on Mount Moriah, must have been the frequent theme of discourse in the



patriarch's household, and how devotion to God's service, and a reverent expectation of the fulfilment of His words of promise must have been thus commended to the hearts of all its members by the common instincts of domestic affection—by feelings, we might almost say, of family pride; if we duly consider how God had thus graciously enlisted, on the side of pure faith and holy living, even the human sympathies and prejudices of those to whom He had entrusted, in those early days, His covenant with mankind, we shall the better understand the nature of Esau's transgression, in slighting as he did all the holy associations in the midst of which he had grown up, alike allured to the love of goodness by his father's blameless purity of life, and shielded, no doubt, by his pious care from contact with the evil around him.

Jacob, with all his faults of character—and most grievous faults they were—seems to have been thoroughly imbued with the peculiar influences of his birth and position. He was, indeed, Abraham's and Isaac's son—an heir through hope of the promises vouchsafed to them, though he grievously misapprehended the means by which the attainment of those promises was to be secured. Esau, on the other hand, might have been, to all appearance, what he was, had he been born of the children of Heth. So his utter recklessness makes him the ready victim of his brother's craft. He *sold* the birthright because he

*despised* it, and confirmed the sale by an oath. Little is certainly known respecting the nature of the birthright and the blessing, and it is probable that some have indulged their imagination in describing the character of Esau's offence, and the consequences which resulted from it. We are told of sacerdotal functions for which Esau felt himself to be unfitted, and of which he was anxious to rid himself; but it may be observed that it is most improbable that such functions would be exercised by the elder son during his father's lifetime, and, again, most improbable that, if they were so exercised, the sale of the birthright could have relieved Esau of the burden. The guilty secret of the sale must, no doubt, have rested with himself and with his brother, or have been whispered at most by Jacob only in his mother's ear. Esau would surely have feared to confess what would have been in his father's eyes his shame; and Jacob would have doubly feared that the unrighteous compact would have been pronounced to be of no effect. We shall be safer, I imagine, in regarding Esau's sin as a reckless, thoughtless act, committed with the less hesitation because he knew that it would entail no immediate results, that his position in the family would still remain unchanged, and his father's affection undiminished. Esau's, again, was not the nature to reflect on the mysterious connection which might subsist between the birthright and the blessing; he felt, probably, at

the moment that it was time enough yet to think of the far-distant day when he must kneel before his dying father and be constituted his representative and successor. Jacob valued the birthright for what it was at the moment, for what it implied in the distant future. He dreaded, probably, a severance from the hopes and glories of his race, analogous to that of Ishmael. He could not trust implicitly to the bounteous goodness of the Almighty to provide for the satisfaction of his earnest longing for a share in the promises of God; a goodness which marvellously discovered itself to him in later days in respect of his own immediate offspring, when God ceased any longer to divide the families of His servants, binding together the twelve sons of Jacob and their descendants as one man, calling them by the new and better appellation of their common ancestor, and saying to them, "Israel shall be thy name."

But Esau's heart leapt not at the thought of being heir of God's promise; he was not preoccupied by any of those glorious contemplations on which Jacob loved to dwell; the birthright was at best an earthly thing to him, of no immediate value, and therefore he despised it. Yet a time was to come when he should keenly feel his loss. Isaac proposes to give him the blessing, and this blessing, in its lower aspect, he ardently desired; he could not but wish to be the head of his family, to be still regarded by his father as he

had ever been regarded, and consequently he complied at once with his father's instructions to prepare for the celebration of the solemn ceremony. It can scarcely be imagined that Esau at this time reflected on the guilty transaction which had probably taken place many years before ; it would rarely, if ever, have been mentioned, we may well imagine, by Jacob to his brother during the interval which had elapsed ; and it can occasion us little surprise that Esau's ardent and guileless nature should have overlooked the possibility that he might be incapacitated to receive the blessing—should have failed to reflect that, at all events, some doubt existed which must first be removed. Without all scruple, then, without any thought of doing another wrong, he hastens to obey his father's bidding. It is when he hears from that father that the blessing is irrevocably lost that he is overwhelmed with anguish and despair. He then learns that there was a mysterious connection between that which he so utterly despised and that which he so passionately desired ; that the heir of Isaac's house must be the heir also of the promises of God ; that he who receives Isaac's blessing must also have desired and expected to receive through him the blessing of Him who was the fear of Isaac, and who had called Abraham His friend.

The text tells us that Esau "found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." The words have a harsh sound, and some have

attempted to soften their meaning, by suggesting that the repentance spoken of is that of Isaac, not of Esau—the meaning being that Esau found no means of shaking his father's resolution, of changing his father's purpose. This, however, would seem to be somewhat forced, as Esau is the only person mentioned in the passage, and consequently we should justly infer that the repentance spoken of must be *his*. Yet, in this view, it is by no means necessary to attribute to the words the harsh sense which they may at first appear to bear. They by no means imply that every avenue to true repentance was closed against Esau, that he could not be sorry for and renounce his past offence: the meaning is that he could not undo the mischief which his wanton levity had wrought for him; that he had profanely chosen the "one morsel of meat," and must abide by his choice; that the birthright which he despised was lost to him for ever, and with it was also lost the blessing, which he could not and would not despise.

And now, what lesson are we to learn from this sad tale of grievous error, of bitter, unavailing regret? We shall not, I think, be wresting this passage of Holy Writ from its legitimate application if we regard the birthright which Esau despised as typical of our adoption into the family of God—of our Christian birthright, as viewed under its spiritual and invisible aspect; while the blessing which he so earnestly

coveted is understood to correspond to those external and obvious tokens of the divine favour which are sometimes vouchsafed to the sons of God in this life, and which shall be richly bestowed upon all who bear that name in the life to come. We have a birthright and a blessing inseparably associated with each other; the latter included under the former as its necessary consequence, its legitimate result and development; but the former reaching far beyond the sphere of the latter, and extending to far higher relations. The birthright, then, which we are tempted, like Esau, to despise, is the Christian character, the divine gift which constitutes us sons of God, whether as it exists in its feeble beginnings, its spiritual rudiments, in this life, or as it is to be matured, in perfect purity and holiness, in the life to come. The blessing is that promise, even of this life, which attaches to godliness, and that perfect well-being, in body and in all external relations, which shall hereafter be the complement of the spiritual blessedness of the redeemed. The birthright is the root, the germ, the earnest of the blessing, the pledge of the blessing ere it comes, the animating spirit of the blessing even when it shall have been received in its fulness.

And do we not know how readily this Christian character, this privilege which has been bestowed upon us in the family of God, may be despised? Is there no deep lesson to be learned from the example

of him "who, for one morsel of meat, sold his birth-right"? Is there no echo ever heard of his faithless, reckless cry, "I am at the point to die, and what profit shall this birthright do to me"? Are there no times at which we are strongly tempted to regard our Christian character as a thing unreal, a mere empty name, which can never profit us; which is now, at least, only a burden and a snare, obliging us to useless self-restraint, forbidding us to avail ourselves of advantages or gratifications which the voice of interest or of pleasure would persuade us to be indispensable to our happiness? Our own hearts, alas! are but too prone to whisper to us, "What profit shall this birth-right do unto thee?" and let us never forget that there is a subtle and malicious enemy who will ever address to us the same language, and teach us, if it may be, to account God's priceless gift to be little better than a curse. And when we go forth into the world, we are in great danger, especially in our earlier years, of being chilled and disheartened by observing how very lightly many account of our spiritual birthright and of their own. We know full well that, if by God's grace we are still cherishing it, we may not trust *them* with our secret, that in so doing we should be throwing pearls before swine. We know with what incredulous mirth or with what contemptuous indifference any assertion of Christian principle would be regarded, how many of our fellow-Christians would



scorn resolves and aspirations which our inmost heart yet assures us are most precious and acceptable in the sight of God. And we must learn patiently, and meekly, and courageously to bear this burden, to encounter this trial. We must endure to have many, perhaps *the many*, against us; we must be bold to reject their evil counsel, to sustain their scorn, to be independent of their sympathy or approval. And let us remember that, to aid us in this conflict, God oftentimes foreshadows the great judgment which is to come at the last, and both encourages the obedient and warns transgressors, by intimations that there is, though men so greatly disbelieve or forget it, a mysterious connection between the birthright and the blessing. Men may not desire to be pure and holy, but they cannot do otherwise than desire happiness. They may be insensible to the spiritual misery of sin, but they cannot be insensible to the misery of some of its deadly fruits. And, accordingly, both in judgment and in mercy, does God at times suffer them, even here, to eat of the fruit of their own way. By some deliberate choice of evil, by some deliberate neglect of good, a man consciously abandons, so far as it is in his power to do so, his Christian character, and breaks his covenant with God. As a consequence of this transgression he is involved in outward trouble; a loss, analogous to his offence, is irremediably incurred; some blessing is obviously withdrawn as the result of his



contempt of the birthright. And have we never heard, in cases such as these, "the exceeding great and bitter cry;" have we never witnessed the unavailing regret; have we never heard, even where true repentance found no place, the heartfelt avowal that the sorrow was indeed the fruit of the sin, and that they are far wiser and happier who, at least in this regard, do not break through the bounds which God has set about them? Thus may a son mourn too late over disobedience to a departed parent—a wrong which can never be repaired. Thus may many an offender weep, when the providence of God tells him, in awful tones, that although the door to penitence is still open, there is yet no place for repentance in respect of the temporal results of the particular transgression; that, if it has entailed upon him the loss of some cherished good, that loss is irreparable; that, if it has stamped him with some brand of anguish or disgrace, he must be content to bear it still.

And may we not, if we will, even the youngest amongst us, search our hearts and try our past ways; and gather from our own experience the assurance that our birthright is not to be despised? Did we ever, for the sake of that birthright, abstain from evil or cleave to good, yet repent of so doing? Did we ever, because we are members of Christ and children of God, and because we would not dishonour the Holy Name by which we are called—did we ever, from

these pure and holy motives, with prayer for the help of God, turn from the alluring voice of temptation, or address ourselves to painful and self-denying duties—did we ever do this, yet regret afterwards that we had done so? Is there, on the contrary, any joy to be compared to the joy which follows from successful resistance to evil, any peace like that which results from ordering our conduct by the love and fear of God? If, then, our own reason and the affections of our own hearts thus confirm the voice of God's Word, may we not despise the suggestions of evil men and of evil spirits, and the suggestions of our own lower nature, when they would address to us the impious inquiry, "What profit shall this birthright do unto thee?"

In considering the mysterious relation which subsists between the birthright and the blessing, we shall do well to look to Him who is our great Exemplar, the Author and Finisher of our faith, and who thus teaches us both how to regard the beginnings of the life of God within us, and how to look on to its perfect consummation.

When our Lord took upon Him to deliver man, He may be said to have assumed, in an especial sense, the birthright; becoming, by virtue thereof, in His human nature, not only the Son of God, but the first-born among many brethren. And mark how He, who from the first bore within Him the germ of

perfect manhood—mark how He appeared amongst men. There lay within Him from the first the undeveloped glories of our renewed humanity. He had the birthright, and the blessing, in all its fulness, must follow. Yet “He was despised and rejected of men; a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” What carnal man, looking on the Son of God in the days of His humiliation, would have hesitated to address to Him, even as to His lowliest follower, the faithless and scoffing inquiry, “What profit shall this birthright do unto Thee?”

Was not this the very language of the tempter? Did not he contrast our Lord's outward condition and duties with the lofty pretensions which His designation implied? “What profit to be the Son of God if Thou must hunger thus? What profit to be His Son, if Thou must gaze, as a poor peasant, on the glory of the world, without partaking of its pomps and pleasures? What profit to be His Son, if mankind are to receive no dazzling and overwhelming proof of Thy claim to that high title? God surely made this world for His sons, that they might gratify their tastes, indulge the promptings of ambition, assert and demonstrate their high prerogatives.” Yet from all these suggestions the Son of God turned aside, to tread His holy path of abstinence, of lowly poverty, of meek concealment of His glory, save only when some gentle, healing ray was permitted to beam on

willing and faithful hearts. Thus bore He with Him, in obscurity and suffering, the priceless treasure of the heavenly birthright, that sinless perfection of the inner man, whereby He proved Himself to be God's beloved Son, in whom He was well pleased. But, the great work of obedience and suffering accomplished, the blessing followed. "The firstborn among many brethren" became "the first-begotten from the dead, the Prince of the kings of the earth;" and while they whose eyes were opened could say of Him, at His first coming, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth," we may be assured that when, hereafter, "He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him," every heart shall also confess His unspeakable glory, and that they who have, alas! even in Him, despised the spiritual grace and beauty of the birthright, must yet acknowledge the transcendent richness of the blessing.

Let us be content, then, to follow the footsteps of our Lord; to conform ourselves on earth to the example of His patience; to endure, as He did, the contradiction of sinners, that we may be hereafter partakers of His joy. Nothing which we can encounter here can effectually dishearten us, if we keep our eyes fixed upon His perfect example. He bore for us that we might bear, after our measure, in Him, the assaults of the tempter, and the cold indifference or the active malignity of those who disregard or hate the truth.

And let us ever remember, both as a warning and as an encouragement, that, as in the instance of our Lord Himself, so also in the instance of all who are His, though the birthright be despised by the unbelieving, the blessing must be acknowledged and esteemed by all. It is well to remember this. God is the author of *all* good; *every* good and perfect gift is from Him; He is the dispenser of everything which contributes to the delight and adornment of His creatures; and He will hereafter clothe with surpassing grace and majesty, and surround with every external circumstance which can enhance their felicity, those who have clung fast on earth, in loving obedience, to that birthright of spiritual purity and holiness which must be the germ and root of all happiness.

There is a day of retribution coming, but feebly foreshadowed by the day of which we have been reading, when Esau was rejected and Jacob blessed. As now the world knoweth not them that are Christ's, because it knew Him not; so, when He shall appear, the world shall know them, for they shall be like their Lord. Did Rebecca take goodly raiment of her elder son and put them upon Jacob; and shall not He, with whom are stored all the treasures of the universe, clothe with immortal honour those who are to be the recipients of His blessing, the heirs of His eternal kingdom? No dew of heaven, no fatness of

the earth, no plenty of corn and wine, shall be reserved for them—gifts in themselves suggestive of necessity, the aids and solaces of infirmity; but, saith the Lord, “to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me on My throne;” “to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”

Such are the blessings which are in store for the redeemed of Christ—blessings too vast for man’s intellect to apprehend, yet not too vast for the cravings of the immortal spirit, which God has created to be satisfied only in Himself. If such, then, be the fulness of the blessing, not only in the secret depths of man’s being, but also in respect of all external relations and circumstances, will even they who discern not the things of the Spirit be able to despise it? No; surely Esau’s “great and exceeding bitter cry” warns us but too plainly of the ultimate despair of those who shall have forsaken “the fountain of living waters,” the source of all good. The happiness which they have vainly sought elsewhere will then be brought forth, by the hands of the Redeemer and Judge, as a diadem and kingly robe, to be the grace and ornament of righteousness; the good which they have idolized will then be assigned, as their rightful portion, to those who have cherished the far higher good which they have spurned.

Then, at the last, there will be for them indeed

"no place for repentance," no real desire to repent—nothing better than an unloving, hopeless remorse; from which may God, of His great mercy, save us, teaching us to hold fast our Christian birthright here, that so we may inherit the fulness of His blessing in the life to come.

## SERMON VIII.

PREACHED IN TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL.

*For Good Friday.*

2 CORINTHIANS v. 14, 15.—“For the love of Christ constraineth us ; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead : and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again.”

THE many awful and affecting circumstances connected with the death of our Blessed Lord are recorded in Holy Scripture with so grave a simplicity, with so solemn a pathos, that any uninspired teacher may well pause before he attempts, in any wise, to deepen the effect which the sacred record must leave on every devout and attentive hearer.

In the passages of Holy Scripture which have been read during the course of this holy week, its direct teaching on this momentous subject has been exhausted. Every evangelist, in his turn, has told us the sad tale of Gethsemane and of Calvary. We have been, so far as oral instruction can make us, witnesses of the



agony and bloody sweat, of the cross and passion; and the more we keep the things which we have heard, and ponder them in our hearts, the less shall we desire to hear, in other language, the story which God's chosen witnesses have told in words which they were moved by the Holy Ghost to utter.

Moreover, while it would be idle indeed to attempt to add to the impression which the sacred narrative is so marvellously fitted to leave upon the mind and heart, there is another task to which this season, this day, especially summons the Christian teacher. It is not enough that our human sympathies should be awakened by the spectacle presented to us, though it is well indeed that they should be thus awakened; it is not enough that we should return from that sight "smiting our breasts," as S. Luke tells us all the people did, for we have been taught far more respecting the death of our Lord than those sorrowing or awe-stricken multitudes could know.

In the Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistles we find the complement, the application, of the solemn narrative of the evangelists; we learn that Christ died *for us*, and that in so doing He has placed us under the most profound obligation to Him. These, then, are the fitting lessons for the day, the fitting thoughts to occupy us as we gaze upon the cross—the lesson that He who died there, died for us; the lesson that we for whom He died must live to Him. This

is the teaching of the text: "The love of Christ constraineth us," says the apostle, speaking, indeed, immediately of himself, yet speaking the common language of Christian men. "Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause." If I act in such a way as men account to be extravagance and madness, it is to God and in His cause that I do so; if, again, I am sober—if I discover such prudence and wisdom as men appreciate and admire—it is for your cause, not for my own: for the love of Christ constraineth me. It is an urgent motive, of the pressure of which I am ever conscious, indifferent alike to the praise of men and to my own personal gratification.

And what is "the love of Christ" of which the apostle speaks? Is it Christ's love for him, or his love for Christ? The words will bear either sense, and probably include both senses; yet they must be understood chiefly to mark Christ's great love for him—that wondrous, priceless love which was the cause, the ground, the very source and life of his own love for Christ. And this love constrains him to self-devotion; "because we thus judge," judging or concluding thus, "that if one died for all, then were all dead."

The latter clause admits of another translation, or rather requires it: "then all died." As it stands in our version, the apostle's reasoning would be, that if

our Lord died for all, all for whom He died were dead by God's just sentence, and also dead already in trespasses and sins. If the other translation be adopted, his reasoning will probably be, that "if one died for all, then the all for whom He died died with Him." In the one case S. Paul points to the cause, in the other to the blessed result, of the death of Christ; speaking, on the former hypothesis, of that death *in* sin from which Christ's death redeemed us; on the latter hypothesis, of that death *to* sin, of which we are made partakers by virtue of the death of Christ for us. It may not, indeed, be possible absolutely to determine whether, in this brief form of expression, the apostle speaks of a death on our part antecedent to, or consequent upon, the death of Christ for us; but it has been justly remarked that, if we understand him to be speaking of a result of our Lord's death when he says "then all died," we are taught to give a fulness of meaning to Christ's dying *for all* which otherwise we fail to attribute to it. "If one died on behalf of all, then all on whose behalf He died died with Him." The efficacy of our Blessed Lord's death is thus strongly brought home to us. It is undoubtedly the act of another on our behalf, in our stead; but it is not that only. It is indeed something originally external to us, independent of us, but it is not so ultimately. As we are numbered, one by one, with those on whom Christ's death for all takes effect,

we die with Him. So are we taught that the grace of holy baptism is "a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness," and our part all our lives long is to be realizing baptismal grace; to be *becoming* more and more what we were then potentially made; to be learning to say, with the apostle, with a fuller apprehension of the import of the confession, "I have been crucified with Christ;" to be learning to cherish with him the ardent desire that "we may know Christ, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death."

One died for all, and all for whom He died die in Him a death to sin which they could not otherwise have died. One died to whom it was not possible that He should be holden of death, over whom death hath now no more dominion; and His death for all was the bringing of all into a blessed participation of His death—of a death whereby death is destroyed, of a death which is the gate of resurrection unto life, of a death whereby men die to sin and begin to live to God.

But the apostle continues, "And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again." We cannot be mistaken, I imagine, in understanding the apostle, when he says "they that live," to be speaking of spiritual life; and his mean-

ing will accordingly be, "And that He thus died for all, enabling all to die unto sin, that they who have now received in Him a new life unto righteousness, may perform the proper actions of that life, living not to themselves, but to His glory." Thus interpreted, the apostle's words will serve to remind us of another lesson which Holy Scripture often teaches—that we may, in some sort, *live* by the act of God's grace and yet fail to perform the distinctive actions of spiritual life; and further, that if they who have received this divine gift of life live unto themselves, and not to Him who died for them and rose again, the life will die out or be withdrawn. To the angel of the Church in Sardis S. John was instructed to write, "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God." Here is a strange declaration—first of actual death, and then of readiness to die; an awful intimation that, so far as man's guilty acquiescence is concerned, the divine life may have actually departed from him, and yet how God's long-suffering may still permit the slighted, dishonoured gift to linger with him, only "ready to die." Yet the life has been imparted, surely, for an end far other than this, for an end most exalted and honourable; even that by its new instincts, its new impulses, its new energies, we

may learn to live no longer to ourselves, but to the honour and praise of Him who alike died and rose again on our behalf, "who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification."

And now let us endeavour to take home the great lesson of the day. Where shall we learn the love of Christ, if not on Calvary? Here is the end of a life of love; not only its *close*, but its *consummation*. All else hung on this; every act of healing, every word of mercy, every wondrous doctrine, presupposed this crowning suffering. He came to be obedient unto death, to do God's supreme will, by "finishing the transgression, and making an end of sins, and making reconciliation for iniquity, and bringing in everlasting righteousness;" and this could not be done except the second Adam carried our humanity with Him through death to life, loving not His own life in this world, that He might keep our life in Him to life eternal. Shall not, then, this love constrain us? Can we not, with the apostle, judge that this wondrous death for all implies a wondrous redemption, a most blessed deliverance both from the punishment and from the power of sin? Can we not, with Him, confess that He who thus enabled us to die to evil and to live anew, has done so in order that we might henceforth live no selfish, sordid life, but a pure and exalted life, to the glory of Him who has vouchsafed to make His death and resurrection, in their virtue, our own?

What is it to live unto ourselves, but to shut ourselves out from all true happiness? How wretched to be of the number of those of whom the Lord said, "He that loveth his life shall lose it." To spend a few brief years in idolizing our ease, our pleasure, our wealth, our ambition, and then to die; to go forth, beggared, into another life, naked of all on which God and good angels look as the life of man's spirit, destitute of all which our Redeemer so dearly purchased for us, and which our Judge can graciously accept, as the price of His own precious blood, as the work of His sanctifying Spirit;—this it is to live unto ourselves.

And what is it to live unto Christ? What is it now? To set Him before us, to keep Him in our solemn and grateful remembrance, to think of Him who is ever with us, as the witness of all we are or do, and so humbly and dutifully to strive to devote to Him our thoughts, our words, our works. It is a hard and humbling lesson, a long lesson, the lesson of a life—this lesson of living unto Christ. Yet, why hard, except because we are so frail and wilful; why humbling, except because we fail so grievously of our duty? Let this be freely and honestly confessed; let us not consent to make avowals of Christian belief and obligation to which our daily life gives the lie. We may well speak with shame and sorrow of living unto Him who died and rose again for us. But, amidst all this sense of infirmity, do we not feel that to live unto

Christ is our true happiness, the noblest end of our existence? Is there any peace like that which follows from making this our aim, any joy like that which results from the hope of His gracious regard? And, if we look a little further on, what is it to live to Christ? God's wise and kind appointment has made this life a fitting school for man on his way to another life. There is much to sober, to sadden every man, as years pass over his head. He is taught in many different ways that this is not his home. Everything on earth which he values, becomes, from year to year, more perceptibly insecure. Bodily health and strength, plans and prospects of advancement, domestic ties, more distant yet cherished friendships—all these are gradually seen to be less stable, less certain; and there are few indeed who have not been taught, by some severe shock, to anticipate a time when any fabric of fancied happiness which they may build upon the sands of time must be laid in utter ruin. What is it, then, to have been living unto Christ, but to have escaped this disappointment, this sense of desolation; to have been living to One "who is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever"? Let us, too, remember that our gracious Lord does not require us to abandon, for His sake, anything which earth has which is *truly* precious or desirable. We must, indeed, forsake and renounce His enemies and our own; but it is a part of His great love to teach us, if we follow Him and live



to Him, to make earth's otherwise perishable treasures unfailing, and earth's fleeting joys immortal.

We may not love father or mother *more* than Christ ; but it is the love of Christ alone which can teach us to make friends who shall receive us into everlasting habitations, to stamp on our earthly friendships the impress of immortality, and to knit the frail ties of human kindred and affection into bonds which never shall be broken.

And yet a little further let us look, and ask what it is "to live unto Christ." The apostle shall answer : "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Is any man on earth to be accounted happy in comparison of him who could utter these words ? And none but he who can make the first affirmation can make the second. If we live unto Christ, death is gain to us. If we have lived unto Christ, then will He say to us at the last day, "Come, ye blessed of My Father."

But it is no easy, no light thing, to live unto Christ. We *feel* this from day to day in the world ; let us *confess* it here. God's house is no place for hypocrisy or self-deceiving. If the plain truth is to be spoken anywhere, let it be spoken here. It is no easy thing to live unto Christ. We all know this ; and when any truthful preacher exhorts others, he does but exhort himself. How, then, are we all to learn this hard lesson of living unto Christ ? There are two great classes of religious duties, which may be distinguished

as *ends* and *means*. To the world at large the *ends* will never be obvious, while the *means* are so. And, accordingly, men who know little or nothing of religion, consider that it consists wholly in the observance of those duties which are the *means* of godly living. Attendance on public worship, family prayer, private prayer, devotional study of Holy Scripture, the reception of the Lord's Supper—these things are regarded by many men of the world as constituting the sum and substance of religion, and they often console themselves by saying that they do not see that the observance of these external usages can make any important difference in a man's character, or in God's judgment of him.

If these outward duties were the *whole* of religion, they who thus reason would be perfectly right, and we should have little ground to suppose that the so-called religious man would be more acceptable to God than the irreligious.

But these externals are but means, and true religion lies in that which is their end. True religion is nothing less than "to live unto Christ." And so soon as ever a man begins to make *this* his object, he will perceive that there are special means provided for, and indispensable to, the attainment of his great end, and that, as means appointed for its attainment, they are above all price.

If we would "live unto Christ," it must be in His strength; and His strength is imparted to us through

the use of means. We know that He bids us pray, that He commands us to receive the communion of His Blessed Body and Blood; we know, too, that He has said, "He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me;" and we know that we cannot have, cannot hold Christ's commandments, unless, by devout contemplation of His Holy Word, we renew and deepen again and again our conviction of their matchless excellence, and also by that humble confession, to which God's gracious promise of forgiveness is vouchsafed, deplore our past neglect of them, and wash off, again and again, the stains which we have contracted in our daily life—the dust of this naughty world.

Sad is the condition of those who make means their ends, but no less sad the condition of those who look for the ends without the means. Let us set this thought before us, "The love of Christ constraineth me to live not unto myself, but unto Him," and then religious observances and outward rules, which might otherwise have appeared dull and lifeless, will at once become instinct with meaning and fraught with interest. We shall hearken to God's Word, in order that we may be more fully instructed, or seasonably admonished, as to the nature of the service to which we are dedicated; we shall pray, in order that the Spirit of our Great Master "may in all things direct and rule our hearts;" we shall communicate, in order that we may dwell

in Christ, and that Christ may dwell in us, disposing and enabling us to live "to Him" "in Whom" we live.

Be, then, the great end of our blessed Lord's death for all, which the apostle here declares to us, ever in our thoughts—amid the duties and engagements of our daily life, in our private and public acts of worship; and, above all, let it inspire our desires and our petitions, when we draw near to that chief gift of grace, in the reception of which our Heavenly Father graciously assures His faithful worshippers that they are "very members, incorporate in the mystical body" of Him unto whom it is alike their obligation and their blessedness to live.

## SERMON IX.

PREACHED IN TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL.

*For Easter Day.*

2 TIMOTHY i. 10.—“Who hath abolished death.”

THIS great day presents to us subjects of devout meditation so many and so glorious, that we are well-nigh dazzled and overpowered by their number and by their splendour. The resurrection of our Lord, regarded solely in respect of Himself, claims our most grateful and reverential contemplation; viewed as being His own personal triumph, as the crown and recompense of His obedience unto death, it cannot but awaken within us the liveliest emotions of joy and pious exultation; and, again, if we look to the several circumstances connected with it, to the several persons immediately affected by it, we discover new and diversified subjects of interest, both for our understandings and for our affections. The interview of the women with the angel at the sepulchre, the visit of the Apostles S. Peter and

S. John, the appearance of the risen Saviour to Mary Magdalene, the walk to Emmaus, the presence of the Lord in the midst of His apostles at evening—all these are themes on which we might well linger, deriving from them all at once instruction and delight. Or, again, if we regard this mighty event under its moral aspect, in its spiritual import, in its consequences as it affects ourselves, what treasures of doctrine and of precept are stored in the resurrection of Christ! And, in dwelling upon any one single point, we seem, in some sort, to be doing a wrong to the vast and glorious mystery of which we attempt to speak; we seem to be forgetting that which we omit to celebrate, to be slighting that to which we are unable at the moment to extend our view. Yet it is well that we should contemplate these high and marvellous truths in detail, and be content effectually to appropriate, if we may, some one lesson which they convey, rather than, by attempting to take in the wider view, to lose the benefit of a close and thoughtful examination of any of its parts. The text, then, reminds us of one signal benefit which has been derived to us from the death and resurrection of our Lord, even the abolishing, or annulling, of death; and the truth which it declares is set forth more fully in the Epistle to the Hebrews (ii. 14), where we read that "Jesus took part of our flesh and blood, that through death He might destroy him that had the

power of death, that is, the devil ; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." This abolition, this deliverance from the fear of death, without question includes, as its essential and primary element, our Redeemer's victory over spiritual as well as physical evil ; but at present I would invite you to regard that great and sore evil, bodily death, as an evil which it was the purpose of our Lord to remove, and which His death did indeed "destroy." It was through fear of this death that men were for the most part in bondage. The sense of guilt might well have made it more terrible, the fear of something after death might well have been added to the fear of death itself. But death alone must ever have been to man a source of deep disquietude and alarm ; he must have been in bondage to it, hearing evermore, even in his most secure and prosperous hours, the clanking of the chain which reminded him of his bitter servitude. And although the abolition of this death be but a small part of the redemption which Christ has purchased for us, it may yet be well to remember that it is a part of that redemption, and to view it singly ; and this because men at large are more or less sensible that, in respect of this evil at least, they do need a deliverer ; and because, if they are assured that Christ has, in respect of it, purchased for them deliverance, they may be thus disposed, by God's grace, to accept

at His hands a better freedom still, an introduction into a yet higher and purer liberty.

Our Blessed Lord would seem to have set us the example of winning men by relieving their temporal sufferings. He does not appear to have been restrained from sympathizing with the common griefs of humanity by the circumstance that, in the first instance, perchance, the sufferer appealed to no higher sympathy, and sought no more precious benefit; and surely we cannot be wrong in declaring to the world that His gospel does comprehend healing for man's ordinary griefs, true comfort for his earthly sorrows; that Christ still cries by the ministry of His Church, "Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Death is the wages of sin, and it ill becomes any Christian man to think lightly of that awful penalty. God made not His goodly and precious works to be thus marred; the exquisite workmanship of the human frame was not formed to be so painfully and shamefully dissolved as it now is; we do God great dishonour if we conceive that, in this fallen world of ours, there can be any sight more offensive to His Divine Majesty than is the dread penalty of transgression, save only the transgression itself, which brought in the penalty. God is the God of nature as well as the God of grace, and the dispensation of grace does but sanction the higher aspirations of nature, and satisfy its purer



yearnings. And chiefly did our Blessed Lord, in the example of His own life, prove to us that the punishment of sin, apart from God's promised remedy, without His strong consolation, was indeed intolerable; that our poor human hearts were never meant to support the woe which sin had brought upon them, save by the mighty aid of Him who was at length manifested to take away our sin, and the woe of which it was the cause.

Was there ever one among the sons of men who looked on death with more profound emotion than did our Blessed Lord? Did any ever discover so deep a consciousness of the malignity of the evil; of the fearful destruction of human hopes, of the laceration of human affections, which it was working from hour to hour? No; He came to destroy it as man's great enemy; to destroy it utterly at the last, and in the meanwhile to give His servants victory over it. Let us learn, then, to regard our Lord as the great Deliverer of man, not in soul only, but in body also; let us learn to regard Him as One who pities all natural griefs, who heals all human sorrows. Is it not the divinely appointed office of grief to bring us to Him; to awaken within us an earnest longing to commend ourselves to His healing power? Is not the destroyer thus ever unconsciously doing the Restorer's bidding, and, by visiting us with temporal evil, moving us to flee for refuge to Him who can alone deliver us from the

wrath to come? Let us never think in trial that Christ is not indeed ready to comfort and sustain us. It would be sad indeed to think that so much suffering is permitted in the world for any other end than this, that men might thus be led to Christ for comfort, and learn, in His holy presence, to desire and to seek far higher blessings than that, the need of which first brought them to His feet.

But it may be asked, *How* has Christ abolished death? By the assured promise of the resurrection of the dead. By the assured fact of His own resurrection, as the pledge of ours. He is the firstfruits, and in Him the resurrection is begun. One who died, and was buried, is risen again, and is at the right hand of God. And this is none other than He of whose body we are members. We are risen in Him, and if this be so, is not death abolished? To us, and especially to those who mourn—to each of us, when our hearts are crushed with deadly grief—He now speaks as He once spake to Martha: “I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and he that liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.”

What a change was wrought in the world, in this regard, by the publication of the glad tidings of Christ! Then, among the heathen at least, were men first taught “not to sorrow concerning them that are asleep, even as others which have no hope.”

Then men began to feel the assurance that death was not a final separation—not a destruction of the body, not an annihilation of the spirit. Then might they begin to cherish tender remembrances of the departed, not as memorials of an irreparable loss, but as earnest of a greater good to come.

The innocence of infancy, the grace of childhood, the bloom of youth, the promise or the perfect strength of manhood, might then be remembered, not as things which God had made in vain, but as treasures, lost to sight indeed, yet safely stored, and destined to be enjoyed hereafter.

The bitter, maddening anguish, which was inevitable so long as the bereavement seemed to be inflicted by some blind or malignant power, may now be converted into the tender, gentle grief, which has learned to acquiesce in wise and merciful, though painful, chastisement. Faith will discern, in the mighty works of mercy wrought by our Lord on earth, not only isolated instances of His lovingkindness, but much rather gracious indications of His general sympathy with human suffering, of His general purpose to relieve that suffering, wherever His aid is humbly and faithfully sought.

The eye of faith may behold Him standing now by the death-bed of the young, as He once stood by the death-bed of the ruler's daughter. He may still be heard there to pronounce the selfsame words, only

with a meaning far deeper and more full of divine consolation, "The maid is not dead, but sleepeth." The mourner may still meet Him even on the way to the sepulchre; may still hear His gracious greeting, "Weep not;" may still feel and know that the Lord of life Himself has come and touched the bier. And when the last sad offices are over, are not these consolatory words as truly addressed to His faithful now, as they were once to the sister of Lazarus, "Thy brother shall rise again;" "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" And if we hear not yet the word of power, "Young man, I say unto thee, arise!" "Lazarus, come forth!" can we rightly mourn that the mandate is delayed; that they who have been gathered to their rest are not recalled to this scene of probation, of conflict and of trial, but that the voice which the dead must hear is withheld, until the warfare shall have been accomplished, and the dead in Christ shall rise to possess the kingdom?

Nor ought we to forget how that instinctive dread of death which we cannot but entertain, in respect of ourselves as well as in respect of others, has been most mercifully abated and mitigated by the death and resurrection of our Lord. We have not only His great example before us for our encouragement, we have what is far more precious, the assurance of the vicarious virtue of His suffering, and of our partici-

pation in the benefits resulting from it. Nor only this, but our mystical incorporation into the body of Christ makes His acts and sufferings marvellously ours, and ours marvellously His, so that we no longer encounter the last enemy alone, but may truly be said to die in Christ, and to sleep in Him. Since His cross and passion, it is quite another thing to be stretched upon a bed of pain, cross though it be; since He bowed His sacred head, it is quite another thing that body and soul should part. He has endured for us, and we endure in Him, the weakness and dishonour to which our mortal nature is subjected; the dark, cold grave is become to us the place of the Redeemer's rest, and the dread void into which the disembodied spirit passes, a dwelling of peace and joyful expectation, which the Saviour has enlightened and hallowed by His presence. Thus, for those who are Christ's, is the sting of death destroyed, the victory of the grave abolished, until the hour shall come when "death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire."

And it is well, indeed, that we should ever bear in mind that our Blessed Lord has thus delivered them who through fear of death were subject to bondage. There are very many, especially among the young, whose hearts are tender, whose sensibilities are keen, whose natural affections are strong, and who are well disposed to cherish and to improve all those domestic and social charities which render life so dear. They

may not have learned as yet to value as they ought those graces of character which are distinctively Christian; they may not be prepared as yet gratefully to seek from the hand of Christ the most precious of the gifts which He has received for man. But they do regard, at least with something of natural piety, many of those blessings which God conferred on man in his unfallen estate; and they must perforce soon feel, if indeed they have not felt already, how their keen appreciation of the value of those blessings must, in a fallen world, expose them peculiarly to the visitation of sorrow, to the experience of mortal anguish.

Should they not then be told of Christ, as of One who has abolished death? Should they not be tenderly admonished to lay up their precious treasures with Him, who alone can keep them in perpetual safety? Should they not be counselled to bring their fears and cares and sorrows to that compassionate Friend of man, who alone "healeth them that are broken in heart, and giveth medicine to heal their sickness."

Be it ever remembered that there is no other shelter for the wounded spirit than that which He offers; that there is no other voice than His which has power to say, "Your sorrow shall be turned into joy."

There is, indeed, another anodyne for the anguish which the fear of death, the experience of death, occasion; a miserable relief, far more to be dreaded

than even that anguish itself. Yet to this relief men, for the most part, turn instinctively, if they know not or reject the great Deliverer. The fear of death may lead men to shun the thought of death; to avoid all contact with death; to shrink from such offices of Christian charity as would force them to familiarize themselves with pain and suffering; to narrow more and more the range of their sympathies, in order to exclude the hated and dreaded object: but hide themselves as they will from their own flesh, they hide themselves in vain, and they must learn at last to *harden* themselves against the sight—the repeated experience—of that which they so greatly fear. They must purchase exemption from pain at the cost of the finer and purer sensibilities of their nature. As we read of those whose *conscience* is seared with a hot iron, even so must their *hearts* be seared, until at length they can contemplate with fearless, yet with joyless and hopeless indifference, either the death of others or their own. This is what the man of the world learns to do, more or less completely, in respect of that awful penalty to which sin has subjected our race; this is the very scope and aim of the philosophy and of the practice of the world. But, alas, what a degradation of the moral nature of man does not this imply! How cheaply does not the tempter bribe such men to give themselves up to ruin! How different was the language which he addressed to our first

parents in Paradise from that with which he beguiles men such as these! To Adam and Eve he said, "Ye shall not surely die;" "Ye shall be as gods." He knew full well that they loved and cherished life, as the priceless gift of their Maker; and, accordingly, to them he whispered, "There can be no such thing as death for you; think not that any harm can touch your excellent and glorious being." But to the children of our fallen world he adventures to say, "Ye *shall* surely die, yet why should you tremble or grieve at your destiny? Is, then, your poor life of yesterday so very precious? Nay, eat and drink, and be content to die to-morrow." Can we endure for a moment the thought of giving ear to this cruel mockery, this fiendish exultation over the misery of our fallen estate? Yet listen to it we must, if we turn away from the voice of Him who came "that we might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly," and who, while He thus describes His own gracious office towards us, warns us also against our robber foe, who "cometh not but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy."

If then we feel, as feel we must, that we cannot endure in our own strength the bitter temporal penalty which sin has brought upon us, that we cannot dare to encounter the sufferings common to man without some better hope than earth can give, some stronger defence than any human arm can offer, let us



come as lowly suppliants to Him "who hath abolished death," entreating him to receive us under His mighty and merciful protection. If we will "take His yoke upon us, and learn of Him," He will never blunt or extinguish our human sensibilities, but much rather exalt and purify them. The Redeemer will not destroy, but much rather restore and consummate the work of the Creator; and, preserving in all their freshness and tenderness the best affections of our souls, He will place them under the safeguard of celestial armour, covering us with "the helmet of salvation" and with "the shield of faith." He will teach us, too, to know the true meaning of the fearful word "death;" to dread no longer only its external and palpable manifestations; but to learn that the body's death is but the result and the symptom of a more terrible disease, yet more bitterly at variance with the happiness of man, more utterly destructive of his true life.

Knowing, as we do, that it is His gracious will to relieve those griefs of which we ourselves are conscious, to remove those evils which our dim earthly vision perceives to be evils; let us also, with child-like confidence, trust to Him when He warns us of dangers which are as yet unseen, of evils the malignity of which we do not as yet apprehend.

Believing Him to be the Redeemer of the body, let us believe Him to be also the Saviour of the soul;

and we shall know hereafter that far more than any loss which we can in this life encounter, far more than any suffering, relative or personal, which may oppress us upon earth, is comprehended in that *death* which has been abolished by our crucified and risen Lord.

## SERMON X.

PREACHED IN TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL.

*For the Third Sunday after Easter.*

S. JOHN xvi. 22.—“ And ye now therefore have sorrow : but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.”

It can, I imagine, be little doubted that we lose very much of the instruction which our Lord's discourses with His disciples before His suffering were intended to convey, if we regard them as addressed to the disciples in their individual capacity, and as adapted only to their condition and necessities at the moment. The Church, by her selection of the Gospels for most of the Sundays between Easter and Pentecost, teaches us that the words spoken by our Lord before His suffering shou'd be studied by us in contemplation of His ascension, and that the comfort which He then so graciously sought to communicate to the dejected and troubled hearts of His apostles was designed also for the consolation of His Church to the end of the

world. It may be, and it has been thought that His *death* was the sorrow, and His *resurrection* the joy, of which the text speaks; nor need we hesitate to admit that the language employed may have subserved the secondary purpose of awakening an expectation of speedy relief; or that, as partially and imperfectly apprehended at the moment, it may have seemed, to those who heard it, to point rather to some such deliverance from distress, as was effected by their risen Lord's reappearance in their midst, than to the great final deliverance, of which His resurrection was the germ and pledge. Yet, if we look at the immediate context of the passage before us, we must, I think, be convinced that the absence of which our Lord speaks is not the brief absence occasioned by His death, that the return of which He speaks is not the resurrection, but His second coming. "A little while, and ye shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see Me, because I go to the Father." The original marks a distinction here, which has not been preserved in our version. The verb in the first clause is not the same as that which is employed in the second, nor is its tense the same. It has been accurately rendered, "A little while, and ye behold Me not: and again, a little while, and ye shall see Me, because I go to the Father." In a little while ye cease to behold Me—to look upon Me—as ye are now doing, and have long done: and again, a little while,

and ye shall see Me. I, who shall have been withdrawn from your sight, shall be restored to your sight ; I shall appear again. And why is this ? " Because I go to the Father." It is obvious that this expression refers, not to the death, but to the ascension of our Lord ; nor can we doubt the correctness of this interpretation of the words, when we remember how He says elsewhere (xiv. 28), " Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved Me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father ;" and again, how He speaks of the mission of the Comforter as being the consequence of that " going away." We should observe also that, to the minds of the disciples, the mystery of our Lord's declaration lay mainly in the words " a little while," which proves that this expression clashed with some previous and more just conception which they had begun to form of our Lord's absence with the Father, which was to be compensated by the presence of the Comforter. Sorrow had filled their heart in the expectation of a prolonged absence, and now they wondered to hear that it was only for a little while. Again, during the absence of their Lord, they were to weep and lament, while the world rejoiced ; they were to be sorrowful, but, on His reappearance, their sorrow was to be turned into joy. We read, indeed, that between the death and resurrection of our Lord " they mourned and wept " (S. Mark xvi. 10), and that

"they were glad" when they saw the risen Lord. But, surely, *this* sorrow and *this* joy are to be regarded only as the foretastes of the long night of mourning, of the bright morning of joy, of which our Lord here speaks.

And once more, if we observe the metaphorical language which follows, we can scarcely doubt that it relates to something else than our Lord's own resurrection. That birth from the tomb was indeed the mightiest of all births. The Man was then born into the world, and heavy sorrow, too, preceded the birth. But the sorrow was *His own*; no other throes than His own brought on that wondrous birth; "of the people there was none with Him." He only was straitened till His baptism of blood had been accomplished.

Yet the sorrow here spoken of by our Lord represents, not His own sorrow, but that of His disciples: "Ye now therefore have sorrow;" and the joy of the mother at the birth is likened to *their* joy: "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."

The sorrow, then, would seem to be a long sorrow of the followers of Christ during His bodily absence from His Church; the joy, their joy at His reappearing.

It may, however, be necessary to mention one other point. There are those who say that the "seeing of Christ again" is the seeing him *by faith*, and the

joy a present blessedness, resulting from that *spiritual* vision. Not to mention other difficulties which seem to lie in the way of this interpretation, it may be sufficient to observe that our Lord *does* speak of this privilege elsewhere, but in a way which seems clearly to prove that He does not here refer to it. In the fourteenth chapter He speaks of spiritual vision : " Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more ; but ye see Me." Here, again, the word in both cases is " behold," and in both the present tense is employed. " I am withdrawn from the eyes of the world, but not from yours ; you continue to look upon Me with the spiritual sight, while the world no longer discerns Me with the bodily sense." In the same chapter our Lord speaks also of a spiritual *presence*. " I will love him and will manifest Myself to him ; " " My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." But this is a presence with individuals, an inward presence both of the Father and of the Son, vouchsafed to the man " who loveth Christ and keepeth His words."

Life is promised even now : " Because I live, ye shall live also." Peace is promised : " Peace I leave with you." Quietness and confidence are enjoined : " Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." But, beyond all this, there is surely a promised return, the harbinger of a triumphant and imperishable joy : " I will *see* you again, and your heart shall rejoice,

and your joy no man taketh from you." It would have been difficult to find any term which could have conveyed more distinctly, more unquestionably, than that which is here employed, the reappearance of our Lord. It occurs in the following remarkable passages: "And they shall *see* the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven" (St. Matt. xxiv. 30); "Hereafter shall ye *see* the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power" (St. Matt. xxvi. 64); "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall *see* Him" (Rev. i. 7). Nor is it unworthy of remark that our Lord, in this passage, uses the same word to express the act both of Himself and of His disciples. First He says, "A little while, and ye shall *see* Me," and then, "I will *see* you again."

We may now proceed, then, to apply the declaration of the text to the circumstances of the Christian Church at large. "Ye now therefore have sorrow;" "Ye shall weep and lament." And why? "The whole creation," says S. Paul, "groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit." It is no morbid sorrow of which the text speaks; no sullen, inactive, despairing sorrow. It is a sorrow which strives, as well as suffers; which hopes and longs, as well as weeps. The sorrow of the Christian Church—of the individual Christian—is akin to the Lord's sorrow, of which He spoke when he said, "How am I straitened



until it be accomplished!" It is the sorrow of those who refuse to recognize any other end for which all things were made than the glory of God, and who are assured that, in respect of fallen man, God's glory is bound up with the triumph of the gospel of Christ. And thus it is the sorrow of one who sees a vast work progressing slowly; subjected, apparently, to strange mischances and defeats, sustaining what appear to him to be humiliating losses, encountering unlooked-for trials.

There is a sorrow which experience teaches us, as we read history, or even as we personally observe the course of the world, and see how the tide of human opinion, like that of a winding and rapid river, is ever taking some new direction, swinging violently from one reach into the next, and compensating evermore for the vehemence with which it has set in against one bank, by the impetuosity with which it is propelled against the other. We almost forget, amidst the tumult and the dash of waves, that the river still flows on, that there is a strong middle current, and that there the work is done. But the stream has a long way to flow, and till the promise is fulfilled, "I will see you again," the work is not completed.

A very strange, a very sad thing it must seem to us that the work should be so long in doing. But, again, what is the work? Is it the accomplishing of the number of the elect? Were it only this, should not

our sorrow be calm and patient? Can we not wait until the full number of pure and gentle souls shall have been gathered in, out of whatever trouble? Can we not wait and watch until those meek, quiet spirits, who love and fear God, shall have been taken home from sick-beds or from other scenes of suffering, purified and made white, as they could not have been were life less saddening than it is?

But shall we err in believing that there is another reason for our sorrow? The Church may be viewed, not only as an aggregate of individual believers, but as an organized body, inspired by one undivided life. May we not, then, patiently and courageously endure sorrow on her behalf? Has she no history? We may not be able to read that history aright, yet we cannot doubt that the Church of Christ, in its collective capacity, is still subjected to probation, still forbid to say that "her warfare is accomplished." It may not be so light a thing as we unwisely deem it, that the religion of Christ should be subduing to itself slowly, one after another, the fallacies of man's judgment and the perversities of man's will; that even the laws of civil governments should be, perforce, rendering homage to the law of Christ; that, in our social relations, we should be recognizing, more and more fully, the principles of Christian morality; that the Great King and Lawgiver of the world should be thus gradually and peacefully putting down "all rule and

all authority and power" which is inconsistent with His own. And can we say that God's glory is not promoted by the development of Christian character, under diversities so wide of social and political condition? Do not our hearts glow, as we find ourselves "one in Christ" with men of ages past, with whom "out of Christ" we could have known no fellowship whatever? And can we think that the hearts of these our fathers are less warm towards us than ours are towards them? As we glorify God in them, may not they also glorify God in the great names of our later times?

Has not God provided at least "some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect"? If the manifold wisdom of God is to be known unto principalities and powers in heavenly places through the *Church*, may not the Church herself learn that manifold wisdom more fully, more clearly, by the devout contemplation of the diversified stages of her own history? May she not remember hereafter, with grateful admiration, *all* the way that the Lord her God hath led her?

So may we be content to have sorrow, "while the firstfruits of God's creatures" are being gathered in; while the Church is being "redeemed out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation," and every age and every clime is summoned to bring its own proper offering, to present its own precious living

stones, to be "buildd together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

Nor must we suffer ourselves to be amazed or perplexed, if the sorrow which we are called on to endure should at times seem to be most unlike any sorrow which could possibly be consequent upon so glorious a work. The beginning of the gospel suggests to us this warning. How very strange is it that our Blessed Lord should have suffered, in His own sacred person, as He did ! What had Judas and Caiaphas, and Pilate and Herod, and the rude Roman soldiers and the clamorous Jewish multitude, to do with the redemption of the world ? How hard to think that that was the sorrow of one travailing with a most glorious birth ! So, too, with martyrs and confessors ; so, too, with the unflinching advocates of truth in every age. The man of the world might abhor, or despise, or pity them ; he has ever found it impossible to esteem or love them. His language has ever been, "What good can ever come of this wretched contempt of life, of this stolid insensibility to suffering, of this unreasoning and obstinate adherence to mere words and names ?" Yet good *did* come of it. The dust of the conflict has passed away ; the cloud of bitter calumny or cruel mockery which once enveloped the champions of the truth has been dispelled ; we now see only the abiding work of faith or labour of love ; we see "the wise shining as the brightness of the firmament," and them

that "turned many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." It must have been a strong effort of faith on the part of S. Paul, when a prisoner, to write the words, "The Word of God is not bound." We know, as he could not, the wondrous liberty which the Word of God acquired, not then only, but even until now, from the fact of his being "the prisoner of Jesus Christ."

Nor let us forget that if this sorrow is laid upon us in respect of the Church at large, so must it also be in respect of ourselves. Every regret and anxiety which we feel for the body of Christ without us will find its counterpart if we look within. The defects of the body are exemplified in our own instance, and we must accordingly endure to sorrow for our own personal infirmities and errors.

There is a very strong tendency in the mind of man to escape from this sorrow. It is humiliating, it is wearisome, it is disheartening. There is a tendency to approve ourselves, and also, if it may be, to realize some present good, which may satisfy us, excluding the restlessness of expectation, the sickness of hope deferred. But nature and revelation alike assure us that all such hopes and purposes are vain. There is no sure ground which we can hold, until we accept the sorrow and embrace the joy of the gospel. The joy arms us to bear the sorrow. No man taketh it from us. When Christ sees us again it shall be ours for ever.

And in this confidence we are content to sorrow now ; to sorrow with the checks and losses, and defeats of that heavenly kingdom, which, through all these, is evermore advancing to its final triumph ; to sorrow with a grief, which even now purifies and exalts our nature, and which shall hereafter be turned into joy ; to sorrow, moreover, for "a little while." "Again a little while, and ye shall see Me." "A little while." S. Augustine says, "This little while appears long to us, since it is still progressing ; when it is past, then shall we feel how little a while it was." Do we not even now feel this in respect of the past ? Do we not almost shudder as we see past years collapse, as it were, till they seem concentrated in a point ? We shall know hereafter how little a while the time allotted to our Christian sorrow was. Let us, then, be well content to sorrow — to note, with honest and intelligent regret, our own shortcomings, to mourn over our follies, to repent us truly of our sins, to sorrow for men's unbelief of Christian truth, for their disregard of Christian morality. Let us be content cordially to sympathize with glorious doctrines, which to the world are foolishness, and with a holy rule of life, which to the world is impracticable ; for, a little while, and the world's realities will be a dream, and our so-called dream a reality. Christ will see His Church again ; and then the hearts of all, who have sorrowed with Him and for His Church, shall rejoice, and their joy no man taketh from them.

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## SERMON XI.

PREACHED IN TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL.

*For the Sunday after Ascension Day.*

HEBREWS ii. 8, 9.—“But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”

In the preceding context the writer of this Epistle quotes the eighth Psalm, in proof of his assertion that “the world to come,” the kingdom of the Messiah, the foundations of which are laid in this present time, but which is to be consummated hereafter, has not been placed by Almighty God in subjection to angels. He probably refers to the belief, prevalent among the Hebrew people, and supported by many passages of the Old Testament Scriptures, that God, in earlier times, governed this world by the subordinate ministry of angels; he would, at all events, instruct those to whom he wrote to recognize, under the new dispensation which had lately dawned upon them, a nearer access to their Great Father in heaven, a marvellous

advancement of the glory and dignity of our humanity. Not to angels is the world to come put in subjection ; but to whom ? This inquiry he solves by quoting the Psalm above mentioned, in which the prophet David, no doubt, primarily describes the position of man by creation in this present world, his glory and dignity as being set over all the works of God in this present time, all those works of God which pertain immediately to his earthly dwelling-place.

We should not, I conceive, be mistaken in supposing that the Psalmist's apprehension of the import of his words was restricted within these limits ; that he was celebrating the praises of God the Creator and Preserver, and confessing His goodness to man as the inheritor of an earthly dominion in which the divine bounty had enthroned him. Yet the words which he uttered might have had a meaning no less true and far more lofty, for they were the words of Him who spake by the prophets as well as of the prophet himself ; and as He, at times, taught men to record divisions of glory or of awe, the import of which they little apprehended, so again, when the human understanding and affections spoke their own language, and drew their immediate inspiration from the sensible world around them, He might still make their poem a prophecy, and invest their tribute of praise to the God of nature, with a hidden sense to be realized only in the wondrous doings of the God of grace.



And thus the writer of this Epistle undoubtedly applies the language of this Psalm to things far higher than those to which it, in the first instance, relates; and interprets it as declaring, not man's short-lived and limited supremacy over a world which has been made subject to vanity, but his perpetual and unrestricted dominion over the great world which is to come—the "kingdom which cannot be moved."

In his brief comment on the Psalm, he dwells on the words, "He hath put all things under his feet," and, neglecting the words which immediately follow, and which would seem to narrow down the scope of the declaration to the comparatively petty rule which man now exercises over the animate and inanimate creation, he insists on the vastness of the dominion which is here affirmed, apart from any such limitation, "For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him." He would carry on our thoughts and hopes far beyond the narrow bounds of earth and time, and would teach us to ponder those wondrous words of promise, "Heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ."

Yet, as must be obvious to all, the promise still waits its accomplishment. "But now we see not yet all things put under him." Man has not entered on his vast inheritance. Yet have we a most glorious earnest of the possession which has been purchased for him. That which is not fulfilled as respects our

humanity at large, is fulfilled in its Great Head and Representative. "We see Jesus, who has been made a little lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honour."

Here it may be well to observe on an opinion which has been held by many, that the writer of this Epistle quotes the language of the eighth Psalm as applicable to our Blessed Lord *alone*, and that it is of Him that he speaks when he says, "But now we see not yet all things put under him." First of all, a careful examination of the whole passage will, I think, convince us that this opinion is incorrect. There has been no mention made of our Lord before the words, "But we see Jesus;" and so there can be no adequate grammatical reason for supposing that the preceding statement, "But now we see not yet all things put under him," refers to our Lord. These words naturally refer to the subject of the Psalm before quoted, to "man" and "the son of man," of whom the prophet speaks. And, again, can we reasonably suppose that, while the Psalm undoubtedly refers, in its primary sense, to the human race collectively, we should be justified in restricting it, in its higher application, to our Blessed Lord alone? Surely it is still *man*, of whom the Divine Spirit speaks the glorious things which did indeed underlie the words, while David uttered them with a lower and narrower apprehension of their meaning. And, once more, all that we are

taught of the relation of the redeemed to our Lord—of the body of Christ to its Divine Head—would forbid our refusing to appropriate, with trembling thankfulness and self-abasement, this wondrous declaration of the rich bounty of our Heavenly Father. We must not, then, venture to circumscribe the import of this great saying, “The world to come has been put in subjection to man.”

But, while we thus interpret the argument of the sacred writer, we would also by no means forget that the glory and honour to which our redeemed humanity is to be advanced is derived to it only through Him who is its Head; and that the word of prophecy, while it is not *restricted* in its application to Him alone, yet finds in Him its incomparably most glorious fulfilment. “The Firstborn among many brethren” is indeed the Firstborn, and the Church may wisely use of Him alone, in celebrating His ascension into heaven, those glorious words in which she rejoices to know that all who belong to Him assuredly have their part. In Him, in respect of His own sacred person, we can indeed believe that the word of promise is abundantly fulfilled; in Him alone can we dare to think that it shall receive its fulfilment in respect of others.

The writer of the Epistle, then, while he intimates that the prophecy is far from having received its final accomplishment, instructs us in the text, in very

remarkable terms, to fix our thoughts on the glorious events in which it has been already realized. "We see Jesus, who has been made a little lower than the angels." These words are, as it would seem, introduced for the purpose of showing that the language of the Psalm is applicable to our Lord; that to Him, as man, belongs the exaltation of which it speaks, since He, by becoming man, incurred the comparative humiliation, in the scale of created being, which the Psalmist declares to be the lot of him, who is, nevertheless, the object of the marvellous beneficence of God. "Jesus," he says, "has been made a little lower than the angels." The acts and sufferings of our Blessed Lord are repeatedly represented in Holy Scripture as possessing an enduring, imperishable effect, in respect both of Himself and of those who are His. If He is seen by S. John in glory in heaven, it is as a lamb standing, as having been slain;" and so here we are said to "see Jesus, who *has been* made a little lower than the angels." Lower than they are He cannot be now, to whom the Name has been given which is above every name; lower than they are He cannot be, for "they which shall be accounted worthy to attain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, shall be equal to the angels" hereafter. But we may well believe that it is an abiding portion of His excellent glory, that He has been made a little lower than the angels by the assumption of our feeble and mortal nature.

Him, then, who thus abased Himself, "we see, on account of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour."

There can, I conceive, be little doubt that the sacred writer here designs to contrast *absolutely* the present non-fulfilment of the prophecy in respect of the human race at large, with its fulfilment in respect of our Lord, leaving out of sight for the time any possible tarrying of the promise in respect of Him; contemplating Him simply as "set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens," without reference to the truth which is elsewhere stated, that He is there seated "until His enemies shall be made His footstool." Nor need we wonder at this, for He *has* entered into His rest; He *has* received the joy that was set before Him; He is, in His own sacred person, the great ensample of what the prophetic word has said that they who are His shall be made in Him hereafter. If His kingdom is still to come, it is rather in respect of the ingathering of His elect, and the subjugation of all hostile power, than in respect of the accession of aught of personal glory or felicity to the Great King Himself.

So we are here taught to look, with the eye of faith, on Him who is thus exalted, and to look forward, with awe-struck faith and hope, to the great harvest of which His exaltation is the firstfruits. Observe, too, the cause which the sacred writer assigns

for this exaltation. "For the suffering of death;" "Because He has suffered death."

Some would connect these words with that which precedes—"made a little lower than the angels," and would explain them as meaning, "in order that He might, by the assumption of a mortal nature, suffer death." There can, however, as I conceive, be no reasonable doubt that they are to be connected with that which follows. Our Blessed Lord was, as man, crowned with glory and honour because He suffered death. This was His path, as man, to glory, and that by reason of the fall of man. There was, as we are taught to believe, no way for man to safety and to honour except through death, and there was none who could thus pass through death to safety and to honour except *sinless* man. All others might, must, pass *to* death; none could pass *through* it.

We are accustomed, perhaps, to rest too much in the thought that this was so by God's *appointment*. This is, indeed, most true; yet God's appointments are not, as man's often are, arbitrary, unreasoning; and while we cannot possibly penetrate the meaning of this wondrous secret, yet we may confidently hope to learn hereafter why Jesus should have been crowned with glory and honour because He suffered death. His death was, it is most true, a great work of mercy and self-sacrifice, and on this account acceptable to God; but we have strong reason to conclude that this

was not its only merit, but that it was, by laws eternal, which we can in no wise apprehend, *the* work which must of necessity be done if the ruin of the fall was to be repaired. "By death He destroyed him that had the power of death;" and to His great act there pertained this antecedent virtue, independently of all those gracious characteristics which are inseparable from it, as an act of obedience to the Father's will and of love unutterable towards man.

But, having thus assigned the meritorious cause of our Lord's exaltation, the sacred writer proceeds to mention its final cause in respect of man, the real end which it was designed to effect. He was thus exalted because He had suffered death, but He was also thus exalted in order that "He might taste death for every man." He had tasted death—this He could not taste again; but it would seem to be here taught that the virtue of His death, in respect of ourselves, is consequent upon His exaltation. For Himself, it was impossible that He should be holden of death; so surely as He died, so surely must He rise again; but if we look to the benefits which have resulted to our race, we must attribute them not alone to His suffering, but to His exaltation also. "Him hath God exalted with His right hand, a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and the forgiveness of sins;" "He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification."



The tasting death for every man is the consequence, not merely of the cross and passion, but also of the glorious resurrection and ascension. So, by the gracious will and purpose of Almighty God, was our Blessed Lord's death made fruitful to our eternal benefit. He stooped so low, He has been lifted up so high, in order that we, being made conformable to His death, might also know the power of His resurrection. Surely there is something in this thought which must fill us with the profoundest gratitude. It is not only while He was "a pilgrim on the world's highway," it is not only in Gethsemane or on Calvary, that the Son of God is seen working out our deliverance; the gladness of the resurrection morning, the triumph of the ascension, are not His alone, but ours also in Him. As "for us men and for our salvation He came down from heaven," so, too, "for us men and for our salvation" He returns thither once more; and when the gates of heaven lift up their heads, and the everlasting doors are opened, it is not simply to do all honour to the mighty Conqueror, the King of Glory, but also to make ready for Him the way to the throne of His mediatorial kingdom, where He may receive, and whence He may shower down, rich gifts of grace for man.

We are taught, then, to regard the ascension of our Blessed Lord, not only as an event in itself most august and glorious, as being the consummation of His personal triumph, the reward of His endurance unto death; but,



much more, as a mighty act of God, wrought for our deliverance, whereby was secured for every man whose trust is reposed on Christ, his portion in the blessings which our Lord purchased by condescending to taste of death. And, again, we are taught to look to that ascended Lord as the firstfruits of the humanity which He has redeemed; to see in Him, crowned as He is with glory and honour, the pledge of the uttermost fulfilment of the word of promise, which has told us that "all things shall be put under the feet of man."

It is a most solemn question for us all to ask of ourselves, whether we do, as the sacred writer speaks, with the eye of faith *see* Him who is thus crowned with glory and honour; whether we do discern in His exaltation the assurance which God has thereby given to ourselves of our own glorious destiny, as members of that Divine Head. S. Paul distinctly teaches us that God "hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Have these wondrous words a meaning? Do they teach us of a privilege which is assuredly ours in God's gracious purpose, potentially ours as Christian men—a privilege which it is alike our duty and our happiness to make our own in very deed? Men speak at times of preparing for *death*, and speak too often as if this were a work which a few hours, or at most a few days, may accomplish. Let us rather think of preparing for an

*eternal life*, and ask ourselves whether these our brief days on earth can possibly be a time too long for a preparation such as this. Has the God who made us designed to invest us hereafter with the "weight of glory" which we have been contemplating? Is the great world to come to be put in subjection to the redeemed from among men? Does the glory of our ascended Lord assure us of an exaltation akin to His? Has He *indeed* said, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me on My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne;" and shall we not feel, in the inmost depth of our souls, the sacred obligation to prepare ourselves, by God's help, for the wondrous inheritance to which we have been called?

We may, if we will, idly amuse ourselves with the fleeting pleasures and interests of this life, forgetful of all beyond it; but it is only a very little while, and all hopes and possessions on which we may have been reposing as substantial realities will have vanished as a dream. The glories, the pomps, the enjoyments of the world will have passed away, like scenes described upon some pictured veil; and when that veil is withdrawn, we must stand for evermore face to face with those imperishable verities, which it is now our highest duty to anticipate. What condition can be so miserable as that of one who shall then be found to have deliberately judged himself unworthy of eternal life,

by having idly and thanklessly persisted, during the time of his visitation here, in regarding God's promised gift as a thing unworthy of his thoughts, his hopes, his efforts, and his prayers?

Let, then, the remembrance of the great life to come have at least some recognized and definite influence on our manner of dealing with the life which now is. Let no day be without its glance directed heavenwards, without its humble and diligent endeavour to approve ourselves in the sight of Him whose mercy has been so strangely mindful of us, the feeble and erring sons of men. Let it be more and more our heart's desire, our steadfast purpose, to do here on earth "all such good works as God has prepared for us to walk in." So shall we walk hereafter in the light and glory of that wondrous life, which shall be the inheritance of them to whom God hath put in subjection the world which is to come.

## SERMON XII.

PREACHED IN TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL.

*For Whitsun Day.*

EPHESIANS iv. 30.—“And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”

GOD's gracious gift of the Spirit, of which our Blessed Lord spoke so emphatically as being “the promise of the Father,” is a gift bestowed on the whole Church militant throughout her whole warfare; and we may well believe the external displays of power by which His advent and His presence with the Church were marked in the beginning of the gospel, glorious and admirable as they were, to have been nevertheless subordinate and subsidiary to that unseen internal operation, that great work of silent spiritual energy, which He was to effect, not then only, but until the final “perfecting of the saints.” It is, surely, most necessary that we should bear in mind that, at all events, the agency of the Blessed Spirit was not restricted to the working of physical wonders; that it did not cease when these wonders ceased, but was and

is exerted still, in a higher region, in a manner not less wondrous, though less obvious; in a manner in accordance with the laws of man's nature and with the external prescriptions and institutions of the kingdom of Christ.

To this universal and perpetual operation of the Holy Ghost the text points us; briefly declaring, as it does, both the priceless benefits conferred upon us by the Divine Comforter, and our consequent obligation to Him. And, first, what are the benefits of which it speaks, as being bestowed upon us by the Holy Ghost? It refers us both to the past and to the future—to a past gift and to a future hope, of which that gift is the earnest. "Whereby," or rather "by whom, ye are *sealed*"—this is past; "unto the day of redemption"—this is to come, and suggests hopes and expectations which enhance, beyond all thought, our estimation of the value of the sealing. "Ye are sealed," or rather, "ye were sealed," for the word describes a past act, performed for us at a definite time. So, in the first chapter of this Epistle, the apostle says, "In whom" (that is, in Christ) "having also believed, ye were *sealed* with the Holy Spirit of promise." Ye were marked as God's own, and that by an act of the Holy Spirit; set apart for God's service, and sanctified to it. But we shall understand more clearly what is implied in the act of sealing, if we look to the words which follow, and which express the future hope to

which that sealing was directed. "To the day," or, "for the day of redemption." Sealed for this; so that, so far as God's will and act are concerned, you might be kept in safety unto it, preserved from the misery of coming short of it, endued with power to attain it. And what is the day of *redemption*? The word is an emphatic word, denoting *utter* redemption—final and complete redemption; final, without further peril of a relapse into the slavery of sin; complete, as extending to the whole man, in body, soul, and spirit. For this blessed consummation, then, is the Holy Spirit said to have set His seal upon us; and inasmuch as He is elsewhere called the "earnest of our inheritance," we may learn that His sealing conveys to us potentially all which we are at the last to receive actually. The "earnest" of the inheritance is ours, and if that be held fast and reverently cherished, then shall the inheritance itself be ours also.

This, then, is the teaching of the apostle. He says to us, "The Holy Spirit has set His seal upon you; He sought you, when you sought Him not; He marked you as His own; and this, in order that you might be safely kept unto that great day, when your souls shall be for ever delivered from suffering and from sin, and your bodies ransomed from the power of death and the grave. He gave you eternal life in its beginning; He has since dispensed to you all things which pertain to life and godliness; and this, in order

that he may at last bring you to the secure possession of eternal life in its perfection." And, on the ground of these vast benefits conferred, what admonition does the apostle give us? "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God." The terms of this admonition involve two other cogent arguments for the solicitous obedience which is required of us. The Spirit, by whom we were sealed, by whom man's complete redemption has been thus graciously contemplated and provided for, is the *Holy Spirit of God*. God's Spirit—the Almighty, Eternal Spirit; and, again, the Spirit of all purity and sanctity—the *Holy Spirit*. Yet, great as He is, His tender mercies are over us; holy as He is, He looks, not with displeasure only, but much more with sorrow, upon human error and sin. We cannot think or speak of God according to the truth of His incomprehensible nature, and He therefore deigns to speak to us of Himself in our own language, and warns us not to grieve One who can know no grief. Yet we may be sure that there is, above and beyond all our thoughts, some truth of God which answers, in this regard, to our dim conceptions of His nature; something purer, stronger, better far than any human pity or sorrow; a loving knowledge, a tender care, in respect of the creatures whom He has fearfully and wonderfully made, which not only justifies, but even necessitates the warning of the text, not to *grieve* our heavenly Guide and Counsellor. How thankful should we be that God has thus

spoken to us, that to us has "the word of this salvation" been sent! Do we not know our weakness, our proneness to error, our liability to be misled by sordid interests, by unworthy desires, by the deceits of the world, the flesh, and the devil? And have we not often felt how inadequate to the regulation of our conduct are any laws of mere morality, any motives which human philosophy, however pure and ennobling, may propose to us? Do we not feel also that man comes to us to exact obedience to his rules, whether of law or of conventional morality, threatening us, if we transgress them, with punishment or disgrace, yet giving us no strength, no will, to obey? And, again, may we not be tempted to look upon the world's laws as selfish rather than benevolent, made for others' good rather than for our own—for the general benefit, at best, of the vast complicated machine of society, of which we are but infinitesimal and neglected portions? Such thoughts will visit the mind, especially in trial or distress, and will tend, according to the temperament of the individual, to crush him or to harden him. And, again, have we not a self—a life within—which is not responsible to human law, nor even to human opinion; a life, the burden of which we must bear alone; a life unknown to others, and scarcely known to ourselves? The apostle said, not indeed without cause, of the Gentiles in their heathen state, that they had "no hope," and were "without God in the world."



But how utterly is all this changed for us as Christians ! There is One who has cared—who is caring—for us ; One who sealed us, set His holy impress upon us, and that in order that we might be kept safe for the day of redemption. For that day He watches over us now ; knowing all that we are, yet loving us, and entreating us not to grieve Him. What a strong motive is here presented to godly living ! We have been chosen by this Blessed Spirit as objects of His care. He sees the issues of the destiny of man, knows for what man was made ; beholds even now, with the vision of the Divine Prescience, “the manifestation of the sons of God,” and has sealed us that we may have our part therein. Can we, then, despise this love ? We may think the admonitions of men, even of our best friends, to be short-sighted or arbitrary, but dare we doubt the wisdom or the tender forbearance of Him by whom we “were sealed unto the day of redemption” ?

How *great* is this Spirit !—ever with us, knowing us altogether, ever reading us aright ; One with whom no concealment, no disguise, can avail ; “to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid.” He knoweth us altogether, and we must be content to recognize this absolute knowledge. We must strive to feel it less and less as a humiliation and a terror, to feel it more and more as our best confidence and joy. And, again, how *holy* is this Spirit !

Men have a morbid sympathy with each other's faults. There are errors in others which our own weakness incapacitates us for reproof; and we know, too, in our turn, how to seek a shelter in the weaknesses and inconsistencies of others. But here is no such screen; we are brought into contact with absolute holiness, with purity of which we cannot adequately conceive. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." And, once more, how *gracious* is this Spirit! Human rebuke may be unduly severe; even a parent may fail to make a child feel that chastisement is administered in love; the word of reproof may express anger rather than sorrow; but the Spirit of God warns us "not to *grieve* Him." Let us think, then, of the power and majesty and lovingkindness of the Word of God which the text addresses to us. It is with us everywhere; it follows us into our retirements; it is heard in solitude; it speaks in the depths of our heart. It controls not acts or words only, but our thoughts also. It points us to the beginning and to the end of our course—to our entrance into the kingdom of grace, to the gate of the kingdom of glory. It reminds us alike of Him who once said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not," and of Him who shall hereafter say, "Come, ye blessed of My Father." It tells us of a divine love, which, when we could not choose for ourselves, chose for us the blessing of eternal life; of a divine love, which prepared for us, before the

foundation of the world, "a kingdom which cannot be moved." It tells us of One who is ever with us, who knows us altogether; who knew, when He set His seal upon us, how frail we were; who still loves us, notwithstanding our many and grievous provocations, and still vouchsafes to say to us, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God."

May we not learn hence what is the only sure basis on which to ground a "righteous and sober life"? A life which *really* answers to this description, is really worthy of this character, must be also "godly." The will of God must be made the great rule of human conduct, and that will as it is illustrated by the precepts, and enforced by the sanctions, of the Christian covenant. May we not learn a most important lesson here respecting our dealing with others, and especially with the young? Do not parents often yearn for the welfare of their children; long, with trembling and with tears, for their preservation from the snares of life? Do they not often feel that the fences which they make about them, in the way of counsels and cautions, are but as spiders' webs? Do they not feel, in suggesting what they deem to be the good motive, how wholly inadequate it must prove to the hard service on which it is to be employed? And so it must ever be, except we ascend to the highest of all motives, and seek to make those whom we love good Christians, in order that they may become good citizens,

and honest, sober men. He whom we are warned not to grieve, suffers not that any other should intrude upon His sacred office, as the great Guide and Counsellor of man. If we have recourse to less sacred, less exalted aid, such aid must surely fail us.

It is the Spirit by whom we live, by whom we must also walk. If we vainly seek to walk by some other rule than His, the life which He has inspired must wax feeble and die. We can do nothing good, except under the guidance of the Spirit of God.

But there is another lesson which the text may teach us. "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God." What a light does this warning cast upon our daily life! Does God's Spirit witness that life? Is He grieved at it? Here is a rule by which to try ourselves, differing very widely from the rules which we ordinarily apply. All may seem well to man, all may seem at least excusable to our own judgment of ourselves, and yet the Holy Spirit of God may have been grieved. Is it strange that He should be grieved at our thoughts, at our words and works, at the common temper of our mind, at the habitual tone of our discourse, at the general aim and purpose of our conduct? How very much is implied in *not* grieving Him; how very much in *pleasing* the Spirit of holiness! Yet do we not know what it is to feel at times as if continual penitence were a superfluous mortification, an unreal and wearisome self-humiliation? Are we not tempted to feel at

times as if we might cast off this load, and rejoice in what we may deem to be a higher degree of Christian liberty? These words, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God," may teach us another lesson. Say that we have ceased to grieve Him by wilful sin, that we have made an effort to become "imitators of God as children beloved;" allow all this—and it is *very much* to allow—yet, in proportion as we obey the Comforter, in proportion as we listen to His pure and holy suggestions, is there not room for a new and more tender grief on His part, as He looks upon "our negligences and ignorances," on those foibles which disquiet our peace, blight many of the fruits of our labours, and obscure the glory which should redound to Him from habitual Christian conduct. Let this, then, be the touchstone whereby to try our imaginations, our desires, our purposes, our ordinary speech, our daily conversation in the world—"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God."

Whenever this solemn word of counsel and of caution is presented to our mind, we must surely apprehend our deep need of the prayer which the Church has commended to us: "O God the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners;" "O God, make clean my heart within me, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me." We must surely feel that, so long as we are in this life,

we shall ever have occasion to offer, with profound humility and with heartfelt earnestness, the supplication of the Psalmist, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be always acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer."

## SERMON XIII.

PREACHED IN TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL.

*For the Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity.*

GALATIANS vi. 14. —“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”

THE apostle has been speaking, in terms of strong condemnation, of certain persons who urged on the Gentile Christians of Galatia the necessity of receiving the rite of circumcision, their motive being, as the apostle expresses it, “that they may glory in your flesh,” that is, “that they may pride themselves in having induced you to receive an outward rite by which they themselves are distinguished ;” and, having thus spoken of a false and vain ground for glory, the apostle takes occasion to declare in solemn terms, in the words of the text, what is the only true ground for glory. The apostle here states the object of his glorying or boast, and then the reason of his glorying in this. He gloried in the cross of Christ—that is, in the death of Christ on the cross, in the sacrifice of the

death of Christ. He was himself, like those whom he censures, a Jew by birth; but in this he gloried not. As he says elsewhere, "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the Church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ" (Phil. iii. 4-7): that is, "those distinctions of race and religious privilege which I before accounted to be of high value, I now esteem to be but things to be cast away as worthless, for the sake of Christ and His inestimable benefits." "In Christ Jesus," says he here, "neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision"—herein lies no longer even the external distinction between those who are God's and those who are not; the only thing which is of avail is "a new creature," or rather "a new creation," of which men are constituted and continued portions, by virtue of the sacrifice of Christ, and by means of the sacraments of the new covenant, altogether irrespectively of the ancient rites of Judaism. The apostle, therefore, gloried in nothing save the cross of Christ, as being the sole hope of salvation to man, the only means of acceptable approach to God.

But, again, why did the apostle glory in the cross?



"By whom," he says, or "by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." If "by whom," by Christ; if "by which," by Christ's cross: with no real difference of meaning, since by Christ we understand Christ crucified, and by His cross, the crucifixion of Christ. Such was the result of Christ's sacrifice in the apostle's case, and therefore he gloried in Christ's cross.

Our Blessed Lord and Master wrought *for* us, that He might work *in* us; He bore the cross for us, that He might apply its virtue to us; and this great truth is set before us in a very impressive manner in the words, "by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Let us carefully observe who are spoken of here as being crucified. Not our Lord Himself expressly—that is understood; His cross is mentioned, and thus His crucifixion is implied. But there are other crucifixions spoken of, as being wrought by that wondrous cross—two other crucifixions; that of the world, and that of the apostle, as a follower of Christ.

"By whom," says the apostle, "I am crucified to the world." Christ suffered for us, that we might be saved by becoming, after our measure, partakers of His sufferings. There was an awful death incurred by every man, a death *in* sin, from which Christ came to deliver us; and, that we might escape it, He purchased for us the power of dying with Him *to* sin.

There is an evil nature which must die out of us, which must be crucified on the cross of Christ, must be mortified, in the power of that Spirit which His cross purchased for man—mortified, by virtue of that faith and love and penitence which our crucified Redeemer is exalted to bestow, and which may justly be regarded as gifts of precious virtue, streaming forth from His wounded body as it hung upon the tree. To this death with Christ repeated reference is made in the Epistles of S. Paul, who speaks again and again of dying with Christ, or of being crucified with Him, as the great benefit which is to follow to Christians from His death.

And what can such language imply, except that the effect of the death of Christ, when applied to a Christian man, is to kill within him the love of evil—to destroy that evil self which he was by nature, causing him henceforth to live by a new life derived from Christ?

And, that we may understand this the better, S. Paul says in the text, “I am crucified to the world;” that is, “to worldliness—to the pride, the gain, the pleasures of the world. I am dead in respect of these things, not living for them, not lusting after them, not caring for them, not pursuing them. The power of Christ’s cross has smitten this evil life, mortified these desires, put an end to these cares, called me off from this pursuit.”

But, again, the apostle speaks of another crucifixion. "The world," says he, "is crucified to me." The power of the world, or worldliness, as our spiritual enemy, is broken; the deceits of the world, the flesh, and the devil are deprived of their dangerous influence on the soul. It may be thought that this crucifixion of the world to the Christian follows from his crucifixion to the world; that, as his love of evil dies, so dies also the power of evil over him. And this, no doubt, is true: yet we may well suppose that there is a twofold benefit effected in this regard by the cross of Christ; that the power of evil from without is enfeebled, and that the tendency to evil from within is greatly diminished, by virtue of the cross of Christ, by virtue of the redeeming efficacy of His death.

And here, perhaps, a question may present itself respecting the strong terms in which the apostle speaks of the result of the death of our Lord, when he says that thereby "the world is crucified unto him, and he unto the world," or when he says, "I am crucified with Christ," and, again, when he says, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." These strong expressions do, however, but agree with the general language of Holy Scripture, in speaking of divine gifts bestowed on man. For these gifts are perfect on God's side, though imperfect and incomplete in man's appropriation of them; wholly given, though but partially, it may be in no wise, received. In

God's purpose, by the act of His grace, the world may be crucified to us and we unto the world, and yet, through our sloth and indifference, the benefit may have been in no degree realized ; the world, the flesh, and the devil may have as great a power over us as ever, and we may have as eager a desire as ever to yield to their seductions. If we compare together the doctrine taught, and the precepts given, in any one of the Apostolical Epistles, we cannot fail to observe this distinction between God's working and man's, between God's gracious purpose and man's realization and appropriation of that purpose. Thus to the Romans S. Paul says (vi. 6), "Our old man is crucified with Christ," yet he presently afterwards adds (v. 12), "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body." And to the Colossians he says (iii. 3), "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God," yet he shortly after adds (v. 5), "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth."

We conclude, therefore, that the crucifying of the world unto us, and of ourselves to the world, is a benefit which God bestows upon us as Christians by virtue of the sacrifice of Christ, and that it is a benefit which it should be our great aim and effort, during our probation in this life, to make increasingly and assuredly our own.

What lesson, brethren, do the words of the apostle address to us ? He says, "God forbid that I should

glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." In what, then, are we glorying? Are we of the same mind with the apostle? There are other things, very different from the cross of Christ, in which men glory. The apostle tells us of some "whose glory is in their shame" (Phil. iii. 19), and that because "their god is their belly," or "appetite," and because "they mind earthly things." These are they who follow pleasure, who glory in nothing more than in self-indulgence, who have no higher satisfaction than in gratifying their bodily desires and tastes. Are there not many such, devoted to gaiety, to frivolity, to light and thoughtless amusement, perhaps to vicious indulgence? And these, so far from glorying in the cross of Christ, are enemies of that cross. The cross is their enemy, too; they look on it, not with love, but with dread; they regard it, not as that which saves them, but as that which rebukes and condemns them; they look on it, even now, with something of the same aversion and terror with which the impenitent must behold it at the last day, when it shall be revealed in heaven as "the sign of the Son of man." The glorying in pleasure is a short-lived glorying; it cannot outlast this life; it lives not even until old age; it often vanishes ere youth be past. Pleasure's cup has a honied brim, but its dregs are bitter. Let us not consent, then, to glory in a thing so transient, so vain, so disappointing. God forbid that we should glory in it. God forbid that

we should not glory in that cross, which would crucify us to all vain and sinful pleasures, in order that we may live for ever in the presence of God, where "there is fulness of joy," and at His right hand, where "there are pleasures for evermore."

But, again, there are men who despise pleasure, and yet glory in something scarcely less vain; men who glory in wealth, in success, in power, in making their way in the world, in attaining some earthly end, which they have set before them as the crown of their hopes, the reward of their toils. Keen-sighted men, yet not far-sighted; for, would they but lift up their eyes, they could not fail to discern that humbling truth of which S. James speaks, "The sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways" (i. 11). God forbid that we should glory in anything so perishable as this, that we should lay up all our treasure in a frail dwelling built upon the sand, a dwelling which the advancing tide of time must shortly overwhelm. How miserable, to have made that all our salvation and all our desire, which shall soon have vanished like a dream when one awaketh! How miserable, that a being made for eternity should glory in that which time must destroy! "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich

man glory in his riches : " for wisdom and might and riches are of earth ; they cannot abide with us for ever, neither can they " profit in the day of wrath," or commend us to the favour of God.

But, again, perhaps a man may say, " I glory not in pleasure, nor in riches, nor in success ; life is to me no time of enjoyment, no scene of prosperity ; I glory in nothing, nor can I see that I have cause to glory." The apostle who said, " God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," would surely have said, " God forbid that I should *not* glory in His cross." Yet let us remember that he himself has said elsewhere, " If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." " I die daily," said he. His was a life of privation, of toil, of danger, of suffering in body and in mind, and all this he cheerfully underwent, glorying in the cross of Christ.

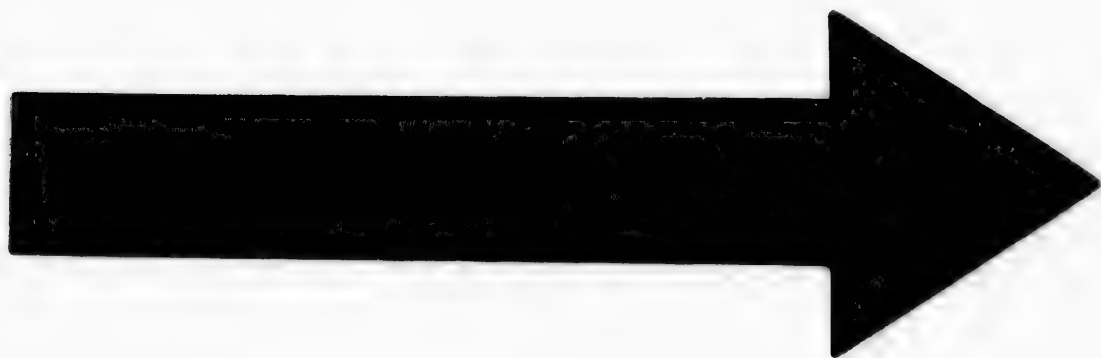
The doctrine of the cross comes to the weary, disappointed, dejected soul, and bids it rejoice, bids it glory, in the lovingkindness of God in Christ. It tells every man that Christ died for him—died, that the world might be crucified to him and he unto the world—and bids him see, in all the sorrows and trials of life, the discipline of a merciful Father, who would by these *very means* commend to him the priceless benefits purchased by his Redeemer's suffering, wean him from the love of evil, and invite him to seek

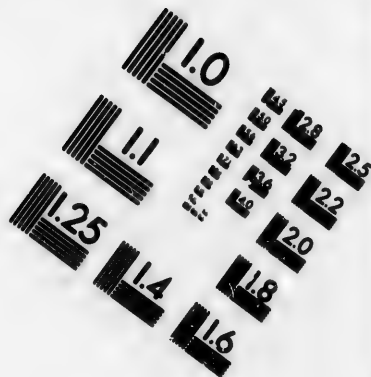
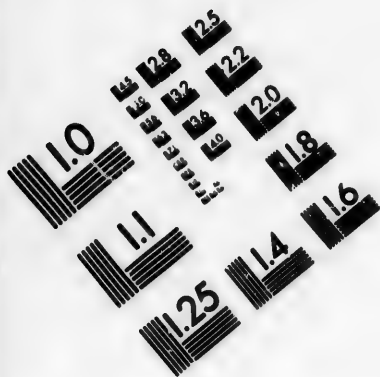
in heaven "a better and an enduring substance." Christian, however obscure and destitute may be thy lot, however wearied thou mayest be with the toils of life, however burdened with its cares and sorrows, God forbid that thou shouldest not learn to glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. God forbid that thou shouldest not learn to thank Him for having saved thee from being beguiled by the pride of earthly prosperity, or the false glare of worldly pleasure. Well for thee that thou *art* weary and heavy laden, if thou shalt thus be led to listen to that gracious voice which says, "Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Forget not, then, Christian, that to this thou art called—to glory, to glory for ever, in the cross of Christ.

But, again, perhaps a man may say, "I do glory in the cross of Christ. I am heartily thankful that Christ died for me. I trust in His righteousness, not in my own. I hope that God will accept me for His sake." A good confession so far as it goes. It seems to correspond to a part of the apostle's declaration, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." But what of the words which follow—"by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world"? Are there not some who would fain leave these words out? They can glory, as they think, in a cross on which Christ died for their sins;

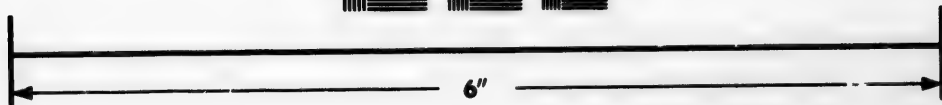
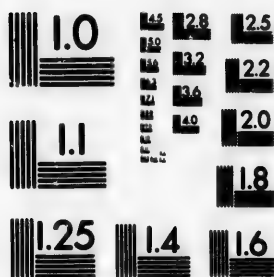


but they cannot glory in a cross by which the world is crucified to them, and they unto the world. They can glory, as they think, in what Christ did *for* them; they cannot glory in that which He would do *in* them. They can glory, as they think, in the blood which "cleanseth from all sin," but not in the "purging of their own consciences" thereby. They can rejoice, as they imagine, in the gift of justification, but not in the gift of sanctification. They hope to be saved from wrath, but they do not desire to be made holy. They would fain reach heaven, but they are not willing to be made meet for it upon earth. Let us, then, remember that man may never separate what God has joined together, and that we are not of the apostle's mind unless we can utter with him the whole text. If our tongue falters in the latter part, we may profess the former loudly, but we cannot profess it sincerely. For no man can rightly glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, except he heartily desires to be thereby crucified to the world, and to have the world crucified to him. If a bare assent to the truth that Christ died for us constituted a claim to eternal life, eternal life would indeed be easily attained; could we be saved through a faith which does not work by love, the narrow way would be broad indeed, and the strait gate wide. Holy Scriptures leaves no excuse for this vain and presumptuous opinion; it tells us plainly of "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord;"





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it bids us be "holy in all manner of conversation," and "pass the time of our sojourning here in fear." And is not this obligation brought home to us most closely by the language of the text?

The great work of Christ, performed, in His own person, on our behalf, is there brought into the most intimate connection with the work which, by His Spirit, He effects on our own souls. His cross is spoken of as our cross. As He died for us, so are we to die with Him; as He died for our sins, so are we to die from our own. It is only as we do this that we suffer the benefits of the death of Christ to be applied to ourselves. He is, it is true, "the propitiation for the sins of the whole world," yet the sins of the whole world are not actually taken away; He died for all, yet all live not by His death. So long as we stand aloof, and are not made conformable to that death, we have no part in Christ's salvation. "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." It is, in truth, a mockery of our Blessed Lord to affect to be trusting to His sacrifice for salvation, while we neglect the work of faith, the labour of love, and make no effort to "live the life which we now live in the flesh by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave Himself for us." "He died for all," says the apostle, "that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him;" and if we would live unto

Christ, we must die to sin, we must be crucified on His cross unto the world.

Is it asked what these words mean in practice? Is it asked what is the world? Anything which stands between us and our duty to God; anything which allures us to evil, or restrains us from good. Men's worlds are very different. The god of this world has different deceits wherewith to beguile the minds of his votaries. But let us know that whatever "sore lets and hinders us in running the race that is set before us," that is our world. Whatever it be that we love more than God, that we desire more than His favour, that we fear more than His displeasure, this is our world. What is it that strives to stifle the voice of conscience within us; what is it that indisposes us to prayer, or to meditation on God's Word? This is our world. What is it which makes us so slow to recognize our highest duty to God and to ourselves? This is our world.

To this evil world we have been crucified by the death of Christ, so far as God's gracious purpose is concerned; to this evil world we must become crucified in very deed. We must "crucify the old man, and utterly abolish the whole body of sin." Let us hear the apostle: "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

And does it seem to us a hard, an unwelcome

appointment, that the redemption of Him who died for our sins must be sought and appropriated by our dying from them ; that He who was crucified for us should require that we should be crucified with Him ? Alas for the blindness of man, which cannot discern his true happiness, or the exceeding mercy of God his Saviour ! To die from sin is our only salvation, to be crucified with Christ is our only life. " O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? " says the natural man, awakening from his vain dreams of happiness, oppressed by the sense of his misery, and ignorant of a Saviour. That " body of death " our gracious Redeemer bids us nail to His cross, and live a new and blessed life, derived from Him and imparted to us by His Spirit. It is our death which is to die ; our only true life is " hid with Christ in God." To be crucified to the world, is to be regarded not only as an act of dutious service which we are called upon to render, but also as a priceless benefit which has been purchased for us. To have sinful inclinations subdued and evil habits extirpated is indeed a blessing, an inestimable privilege. God requires of us nothing which involves not our truest interest, our purest happiness. The old man indeed suffers when it is crucified, the body of sin is pained in being destroyed ; and with its sufferings we sympathize, even as we should in the severing of a diseased limb. There is a present pain, but there is also an enduring security ;

there is a brief self-denial, but there is an everlasting, an infinite recompense.

And, again, can we doubt the exceeding love of Him who died for us, of Him who for us "poured out His soul unto death"? He, then, Himself has said, "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be."

Let us beware of loving that life which Christ bids us hate, of sparing that life which Christ bids us crucify; that evil life of unbelief, of self-indulgence, of self-will; that sordid, worldly, carnal life, which is not subject to the law of God, but is engrossed by the things of earth. This is no true life, but death; and, in loving it and saving it, we shall lose our true life: whereas, if we will faithfully and lovingly obey our Lord, and follow Him, Whom we profess to serve; and even as He laid down His precious life for us, so hate and renounce, for His sake, that which men falsely esteem to be their life in this world, then shall we keep our true life unto life eternal; and where Christ is, there shall we also His servants be.



## SERMON XIV.

PREACHED IN TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL.

*For All-Saints' Day.*

HEBREWS xii. 1.—“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.”

THE festivals of the Church may, with only one or two exceptions, be arranged under two classes; the one including those on which we celebrate the works of God in the economy of redemption, the other those on which the saints of God are proposed for our imitation, and commended to our human sympathies.

Of this latter class there is, perhaps, none which is so calculated to elevate the thoughts and to impress the mind, as is the great festival of this day. On other holy days of the same character we are taught to contemplate some distinguished but solitary example of Christian excellence; to-day we are invited to direct our gaze to an innumerable company—“a great multitude, which no man can number,” the

whole assembly of "the spirits of just men made perfect." In the one instance our eyes are fixed on some "bright particular star," set by God's wondrous power and grace in the firmament of His spiritual heaven; in the other our glance sweeps the whole of its vast horizon, not resting exclusively on those greater lights which differ from the rest in their excelling glory, but passing on to the multitudes which shine only less brightly than they, and to the dim clusters of stars, which remind us anew, by their very indistinctness, how immense is the field of our vision, how wide the limits of that celestial kingdom, the glories of which we vainly endeavour to apprehend.

Our thoughts are to-day of God's elect in all ages and in all climes—of that countless host which, since the world began, has been evermore traversing the narrow stage of this little earth of ours, on its way to the great world to come. Our thoughts are of the children of God, who walked with Him before the flood; of the holy patriarchs, who dwelt in tents as heirs of His promise; of the true Israelites under the law; and of Abraham's spiritual seed, which has been gathered from all lands since the fulness of the Gentiles has been coming in.

These are the "elect" whom God "has knit together in one communion and fellowship," represented upon earth, at any given time, by the body which we designate the militant Church; yet only so represented

thereby, as a mighty river may be said to be represented to a spectator by the waters which pour, at any given moment, through some brief portion of its course to which his view is restricted.

Nor does this festival present to the mind only vast and distant objects of contemplation ; it also appeals most powerfully to our human sympathies. We might justly regard the angelic host, the festival of which was not long since celebrated, as a spectacle not less august than that which is presented by the congregation of the redeemed ; we may well believe that no created beings are a loftier object of contemplation than the "angels, who excel in strength," "the ministers" of God, "who do His pleasure ;" nor need we wonder that the latest thoughts of a great writer of our Church should have been directed, as we read that they were, "to the number and the order of the angels." But while we look with admiration and grateful love to these exalted servants of the Most High, who are sent forth by Him to minister for man, still our nearer affections, our human sympathies, must be with those who have been partakers of our flesh and blood, who have inherited with us the same infirmities, have passed through the same conflicts, and have known the same fears and hopes which are ever influencing our own minds.

And, again, the Festival of All Saints, while it is general, is also particular ; while it embraces all, it

includes individuals in whom we severally have a very near concern ; and thus, while it bids the whole Church on earth remember the whole Church in Paradise, it enables the several members of the Church militant to blend, with the general commemoration of the Church expectant, some loving, longing thought of those who have walked beside them here, and with whom they trust to walk yet again in the streets of the city of God.

When we celebrate the memorial of an apostle or evangelist or martyr, we should, indeed, cherish the thought that in Christ we are one with him ; we should bless God for the service which we have been permitted to derive from his teaching or from his example ; we should gratefully recognize the wondrous bond which subsists, in the mystical body of our Lord, between ourselves and one who has for ages been gathered to his rest. But still this general and widely extended communion of the saints was never designed to supplant the closer ties, which, as they were ordained by the God of providence, are hallowed by the God of grace. "Of Him every family in heaven and earth is named;" and the bond which unites us all in Christ was, we may be assured, never designed to relax, but rather to strengthen and perpetuate every natural and domestic tie.

And thus, on a day like this, while our charities should indeed be permitted and stimulated to range

through the whole compass of the "one communion and fellowship," and while we may rightly and wisely exult to know that, in the Head of our redeemed and renewed humanity, we are indeed one with patriarchs, prophets, and apostles; yet the selfsame Christian love, which bids our sympathies extend through the whole great body, will as surely bring them back again, to dwell especially upon those members of the body who have, under the providence of God, acquired stronger claims upon us individually, as being better known, more nearly related, more intimately connected with the story of our own lives, and bound to us by a thousand endearing associations.

So this day may be to each of us a day of solemn gladness or of chastened sorrow, as we call to mind, with more of Christian hope or of human tenderness, some member of that vast company which we are invited to commemorate collectively. Each will have some memory of his own suggested by the day, some recollection of a friend or relative who was not long since with us upon earth, and is now here no more.

It is well that we should gratefully and reverently acknowledge how the great truths of the Christian revelation alone give to the dark mystery of death an interpretation which satisfies the demands alike of our understandings and of our affections, both vindicating the ways of God and asserting the true dignity of man. This day alone, by the truths to which it bears witness,

teaches us how to think aright even of an infant's death—shutting out those cold, dark, guilty thoughts which, apart from the hope of the gospel, may, by the death of an infant, be too readily suggested. That brief life, it tells us, was not imparted in vain; the infant did not live to die. God thinks not of such deaths as men too readily consent to think of them. His feeblest, lowliest creatures are not so vile in His sight as man's hardness of heart and unbelief would sometimes assume them to be. There is a profound truth involved in the words of our Christian poet—

“The All-bounteous hath not given to take away,  
The All-wise hath not created to destroy”—

(though the words may be wrested, as he represents them to have been, so as to convey a most erroneous meaning); and, if we knew death in no other form than that which it presents when it closes a life of a few hours or days, we might still well be thankful that we had not been left to read this mystery by the light of nature, but had been taught by revelation to regard this life as the portal of the next, and in this assurance to trust implicitly to the wisdom and to the goodness of the Almighty, in assigning to each of His creatures the term, however brief or prolonged, of their continuance on the present scene.

But there are other forms in which death is known to us. The grief may be, not that life has been cut off in its very beginning, but that it has been continued

in pain and weariness ; that youth has been robbed of all its freshness and hopefulness ; that the season which is generally the joyous springtime of life, has known no earthly joy. And how very bitter would be the recollection of such tedious disease, of early death, which seemed still to come too late—premature indeed, and yet too long deferred—how desolate would such remembrance be, apart from the hopes associated with another life, and with the relation in which this life stands to it as the time of our probation !

Looking to these hopes, we may trust that it was no arbitrary appointment which chained the sufferer to the bed of sickness, which forced him to feel, from the very beginning, that all which earth could give was vanity ; we have room to trust that the grievous visitation was a wise and merciful discipline, that those dull, joyless years were indeed the precious seed-time of an eternal harvest.

Nor is there any other form in which death presents itself to our view, under which we can dare to contemplate it apart from the hopes of the future. Let it be the end of a long, a happy, a successful course, yet it is, without the hope which Christ has purchased for us, nothing else than the blank and dismal *end* of that course—a terror which we may be sure that the Author of our being never meant us to confront, in our naked human weakness, unprotected by the helmet of salvation and the shield of faith.

Let us remember, too, that, as years advance, we need more and more the protection and the comfort which a belief in Christian truth alone can give us ; and that, if we neglect to arm ourselves in this celestial panoply, then we can have no other safeguard against inevitable sorrow, than the miserable insensibility and hardness of heart, by which men sometimes consent to purchase relief from anguish, at the cost of the finest feelings and the noblest instincts of our human nature.

While we are still young, earth seems to be our secure home, and this life our abiding resting-place. The other life is, in our esteem, a land which is very far off. Our friends are here, and we look to have them long with us. We may have lost aged relatives, but they were probably little known to us, or, if they were familiarly known, we have comforted ourselves, as childhood can so readily do, by dwelling on the thought of their advanced age, and of the long, long years which must pass away ere other cherished friends could reach it. But years steal on, and the father now stands where the grandsire once stood, and we are made at length to feel that the spell which seemed to guard our loved circle is broken, that death has, indeed, entered it ; and then we are soon taught other and sterner lessons, by the death of equals or of those who have numbered fewer years than our own ; until at length, if we have ears to hear, we cannot but have



heard, again and again, a voice which tells us that this is not our rest, that it is on another shore than this that we must look for unchanging relations, for stable and imperishable joys.

It is well, then, that we should take this lesson home on a day like this. It can scarcely ever return to us without suggesting some new lesson of the vanity of life ; without whispering to us some new name, which must be remembered now, not as heretofore, as the name of one who stood beside us in the conflict, but as the name of one who has entered, as we trust, into his rest.

Those who have been thus removed from us, are spoken of by the sacred writer in the text as "a great cloud of witnesses." We will not pause to inquire whether, in employing this expression, his purpose is to instruct us that the departed are immediately cognizant of what is now passing upon earth ; at all events, he represents them to us as combatants whose conflicts are over, whose race is run, who have attained a place of honourable repose, and by whose example and sympathy we should be animated in our own endeavours to secure the prize.

And surely one amongst the many and powerful inducements which are presented to us to "run with patience the race which is set before us," may be found in the remembrance of departed friends, and in the contemplation of the thoughts which must fill their

minds in their place of rest, when their regards are turned to earth, and to us with whom they have been conversant below. True it is that the Word of God is our supreme guide, that the will of God is our highest law, that we should be possessed evermore by the remembrance of our Father in heaven, of our Intercessor on high, of our Divine Sanctifier and Comforter. Yet, in subordination to these grand motives to godly living, other motives may find their due place; and, as God speaks to us on earth by human voices, so also may He speak effectually to our hearts by the remembrance of departed friends, and by our conviction of their hopes and longings on our behalf. May we not think, when the choice between well-doing and evil-doing is presented to us, how a departed parent would regard us could he stand before us? May we not imagine how the affectionate counsel or warning which he would have offered in the flesh would now derive a far deeper solemnity, a far more cogent urgency, from his assured knowledge of many of the great secrets of the invisible world? May we not undoubtedly pronounce what the yearnings of his heart must be for us as he remembers our condition and character as they were known to him on earth, and forecasts, with a spiritual discernment proportioned to his higher sphere of existence, the peculiar temptations of our future course, our easily besetting sins?

Nor will it be unprofitable to muse on those who

have been taken from us at an earlier age, and to reflect how they are now prepared, in other tones than those of youth, to bear witness to the great truths of God, and to rebuke and exhort with an authority with which they could not have spoken upon earth.

So, again, may we think of those who were, in intellectual power and in attainment, our inferiors, whom we should have taught on earth, but who would be our teachers now, eclipsing all our boasted knowledge, by their profound and simple intuition of the great truths which it behoves us to know and believe for our souls' health.

Furthermore, the thought of this future world should assuredly guide us in our conduct towards those with whom we are now associated on earth. We shall be divided from them too hereafter. We may precede them or they may precede us into the world of spirits. In either case, let us be assured, we shall feel that it was a thing of no light moment how we here conversed with them. Have we ever lost a young friend, a familiar companion, a partner of our studies and our amusements, a close and intimate associate, one whom we loved and cherished? How do our thoughts travel back through the days and years of that intimacy! With what deep shame, with what poignant regret, do they rest on any unworthy record of the past! How thankfully do they revert to any pure or holy converse, to any mutual encouragement

to good, to any combined resistance to evil ! We feel that we had to do with an immortal soul, with a member of Christ, with a child of God, with an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. And death teaches us most impressively that, while we walked, perchance, so heedlessly together with him, his great probation was, indeed, progressing, and we were active agents in it ; that God had commissioned us to help him forward in the right way that leadeth to everlasting life, while our best hope must too often be that we did not seriously imperil the salvation of one whom we yet called our friend.

Nor let us suffer ourselves to imagine that the attempt to discharge our duty in this high regard must needs be a wearisome, if not an impracticable, task.

Let us not doubt, but earnestly believe, that the God who made us and redeemed us, while He bids us remember Him, calls upon us to forget and renounce nothing which is really good ; that, while He bids us expect and prepare for the life to come, He does not require us to abandon the purest and truest enjoyments of this life. We may walk together as pilgrims and strangers, and yet be happy here ; we may be wise for eternity, and yet not without enjoyment in time.

There are innocent joys, there is Christian mirth. The overflowing gladness of the youthful heart, God's own creation, God's own gift, will be but the richer

and the brighter, if we have respect to His laws and walk in the way of His commandments. We may pray earnestly every day, and strive earnestly every day to be kept without sin, and for that very reason pass the day in a cheerfulness and serenity unknown to him who has forgotten his duty to God. Let us never dare to say in our hearts that obedience to the gospel of Christ, God's great cure for all sorrows, is of all sorrows the worst; His healing of our wounds, the worst wound of all. We may cast away His love and fear far from us; but can we, by so doing, rid ourselves of disappointment, of misfortune, of sickness, of grievous suffering, of the fear of death, of death itself? We may, indeed, for a little moment hide the apprehension of these evils from our minds, but this is all that we can do.

Rather let us reasonably and courageously recognize their existence, and lay hold on the divine consolation and deliverance. Let us embrace the blessed belief of "the one communion and fellowship of God's elect;" let us cling to our faith in Him, in whose mystical body they have been "knit together;" let us walk with each other here worthily of our prayer that God would "grant us grace to follow His blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living;" so shall we come at length "to those unspeakable joys which He has prepared for them that unfeignedly love Him;" and

assured, as we then shall be, that godliness "has the promise of the life which is to come," we shall also gratefully confess, as we look back upon our earthly pilgrimage, that it indeed had also "the promise of the life that now is."

## SERMON XV.

PREACHED IN TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL.

S. MATTHEW xviii. 20.—“Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.”

It is not my object on the present occasion to show that these words, addressed originally to the apostles, were addressed in them to the Christian Church at large, or to determine—though it is a very important inquiry—what is signified by “being gathered together in the name of Christ.” I will assume that the promise of the text belongs, as it has generally been understood to belong, to every lawful assembly of the one Catholic and Apostolic Church, and, consequently, to the ordinary assemblages of Christians in the house of God for the purpose of divine worship. The application of the promise of our Lord to such assemblies appears to be recognized in the closing prayer of our morning and evening services—the prayer of S. Chrysostom, in which we are instructed to plead with God His gracious assurance, that “where two or three are gathered together in His name, He will grant their requests;” and it will

consequently be no strange thought to us, that in the house of God, and at the hour of divine service, we are approaching, in a peculiar sense, into the presence of Him who filleth heaven and earth. For He who filleth heaven and earth deigns to be specially present at certain times and in certain places, and most ungrateful do we show ourselves for His exceeding condescension, most insensible of our own need of that condescension, if we attempt to merge, in the general truth of God's Omnipresence, the more solemn and moving conviction, that He is *for us* especially present at times and in places which He has hallowed alike for His service and for our profit. Holy Scripture often speaks to us of places possessing a peculiar sanctity. The ground whereon Moses stood when he gazed on the burning bush was holy ground, because God there especially revealed Himself. The most holy place in the tabernacle and in the temple was most holy, because God there gave visible tokens of His presence. Nor is this relative sanctity of places confined to the times of the old covenant. S. Matthew more than once speaks of Jerusalem as the holy city—holy, as being the peculiar dwelling of the Most High; and S. Peter calls the Mount of the Transfiguration "the holy mount," because the sacred form of his Divine Master, though it had in some sort sanctified by its presence the length and breadth of the land of Israel, had on that chosen spot been clothed in unearthly glory, revealed to the



eyes of His disciples in a majesty belonging to the world to come. Holy places, then, there are ; and holy are those places of which Christ says, "There am I."

And now, brethren, I would invite your attention to this great truth, that in our public worship we draw near, in a peculiar manner, into the presence of God ; for I am deeply persuaded that, in proportion as we realize this truth, in that proportion will our church be to us the house of God, the gate of heaven.

A venerated divine and poet of our Church has well said—

"When once thy foot enters the church, be bare.  
God is more there than thou : for thou art there  
Only by His permission. Then beware :  
And make thyself all reverence and fear."

"God is more there than thou." Let us write, or rather pray God to write, this thought on our hearts. "We walk by faith, not by sight," or "appearance," says S. Paul ; and even so must Christians learn to walk in every act of their lives, and more especially in those acts which pertain very nearly to their highest duty to God. If we would use the church rightly, we must learn to use it "as seeing Him who is invisible." How widely different is this persuasion, "I am in the presence of God," from any lower apprehension which we may entertain of the nature of Christian worship ! There may be a decency, a sobriety, even a solemnity, in the demeanour of one

who walks by sight—or appearance—in the house of God; who sees there nothing more than the eye sees—an assembly of men gathered for a serious and pious object: but how far short must not this fall of the devotion and reverence of one who “walks by faith” in God’s house, and sees God Himself present there!

In order that we may the better understand this, let us follow the order of our service, and observe the several acts which it involves. We need scarcely remark on the profound meaning which is given to the opening words of confession and supplication by the conviction that God is with us of a truth—that He is there to receive our sorrowful acknowledgment of sin, there to hear our cry for pardon and restoration. And when His answer comes to our cry—His gracious message of absolution to the penitent—will not both the purport and the power of this announcement be very differently apprehended—according as we believe ourselves to be worshipping a God near at hand, or a God afar off? If we believe that Christ is in the midst of us, shall we not be assured that the declaration of pardon is indeed made by Him who has power on earth to forgive sins; that Christ’s minister is indeed His minister, His servant, speaking his Lord’s words, not only in His name, but in His very presence—discharging the commission, wherewith he has been entrusted, even in the very audience of the Great King? And when we rise to praise God,

what a vivid sense is imparted to every word which sets forth His glory, by the apprehension of His presence! How cold comparatively must our hymns of thanksgiving be, while we seem only to be making confession to each other concerning the majesty of God—to be speaking *of* Him rather than *to* Him: but how fervid, how sublime do they become, when we once apprehend that we are speaking to God Himself; that to Him, the King Eternal, present by the Spirit of His Son, we lift alike our hearts and our voices, saying, “We praise Thee, O God; we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord!”

Our service of praise will discover to us, perhaps, more strikingly than any other part of our worship, the necessity of recognizing God’s presence; for, being as it is the highest degree of Christian worship, it suffers a loss, proportionately great, from the absence of a true spirit of devotion—of that spirit which alone can rightly interpret and justify the language of praise.

There would seem, indeed, to be no other safeguard against irreverence in the use of this language, save the abiding conviction that we are addressing a present God—a God who graciously permits to us, in His house, an access into His immediate presence, and who must, therefore, surely require of us the meek reverence of those exalted beings, who, serving Him in heaven, veil their faces, when they cry one to another, in praise of His thrice Holy Name.

Again, when we rehearse our Creed, what thought so fitted to elevate and solemnize our minds as the thought of the presence of Christ—a glorious Presence, which seems to grow clear and distinct before us, as we trace His wondrous steps from the manger to the cross, from the cross to the right hand of God? My meaning may, perhaps, be better understood, if we reflect how very different is the effect of these self-same words of the Creed, when they are repeated in catechizing, or when they are addressed, in the form of an interrogatory, in Holy Baptism, from their effect when they are intelligently and devoutly uttered by the Church as a portion of her solemn worship. And what occasions this difference, save that, in the former cases, the confession of our faith is *not* presented before God, while in the latter case it is? The soldiers of Christ then avow allegiance to their Great King in His very presence, and it is the apprehension of His presence which gives to this avowal its deep significance and interest. Nor should we fail to note the place which the Creed occupies in our Order for Morning and Evening Prayer; it closes, and most appropriately, the service of praise, and is accordingly appointed to be “sung or said,” as forming a portion of that service.

Again, in respect of our prayers, must we not deeply feel the necessity of believing that Christ is in our midst, in order that we may rightly offer them?

We are taught to pray, in our public worship, not for ourselves exclusively, but for others also; every word which we utter is uttered on behalf of others; and it is to be feared that our charity often faints and is weary before it has accomplished half its task; it is to be feared that we regard many of the supplications which the Church instructs us to offer, as matters in which we have little or no concern. What, then, is more calculated to quicken and enlarge our Christian charity, than a conviction of the presence of Him who loved the Church and gave Himself for it? What more fit to remind us that we are all members of Christ, than a faithful recognition of the presence of our Head? In Him we feel ourselves to be knit together, and are enabled earnestly to believe that the highest of our fellow-Christians needs our prayers, that to the lowliest they are due; that the good of the whole body is mysteriously made to depend on the service and on the sympathy of every individual member.

It is in the assembly, in the midst of which Christ is, that Christians are taught truly to love one another. We must gather ourselves around the very feet of our common Lord, in order that the precious ointment of divine love, poured without measure on the Head of Him, our Great High Priest, and coming down to the skirts of His clothing, may reach even unto us.

But, once more, even those parts of our service

which pertain less directly to the worship of God cannot be performed aright, if we fail to recognize the presence of Christ in His Church. To the reading of God's Holy Word an especial solemnity attaches, when it is read in His house ; it should there be read and heard with peculiar reverence, for it is the law of the Great King, recited in His own audience—the Word which is to judge us, pronounced in the presence of Him who shall come to be our Judge.

So, too, should the preaching of God's Word, and the manner in which that preaching is heard and received, be ever controlled by a sense of God's presence. He who speaks should ever bear in mind that he is teaching and exhorting in the presence of Almighty God, while they who hear should be careful to remember that it is in the presence of God that they are receiving warning and instruction.

Thus have I attempted to trace, very briefly and imperfectly, the mighty influence which will be exerted on the conduct of the several parts of divine service by the recognition of the great truth that Christ is, according to His promise, here in the midst of us.

This gracious promise of our Lord, if it be steadfastly believed, will give a spiritual life, a solemn reality to our appointed forms of worship, which they cannot otherwise possess ; it will interpret to us the language of devotion which the Church has prescribed ; it will make holy and awful words, which were other-

wise of necessity only a danger and a snare, a mighty help, a sure guide to us in the great duty of calling upon God.

A sense of the presence of our Lord will, moreover, enable us to correct the false estimate which we often form respecting the relative importance of the different parts of divine service.

We not unfrequently assign the first place to that which is lowest, to that which the remembrance that Christ is in the midst of us will make us feel to be the lowest. If He be there, so near us, what must be our great business with Him, the chief occasion of His gracious presence? Surely that we should confess our sins before Him, and receive His merciful declaration of forgiveness; that we should set forth the praise of the Father, to whom we come through Him; that we should prefer to God those requests which can be offered only in His name. These are our pressing duties as sinners and suppliants, who are graciously encouraged to add, to lowly confession and to earnest prayer, the voice of praise and thanksgiving; and, these duties discharged, we may be thankful to be also instructed and comforted by the reading of God's Holy Word, to be taught and admonished by the voice of His appointed minister. The writer whom I have before quoted says—

“Resort to sermons; but to prayers most:  
Praying's the end of preaching.”

"Praying's the end of preaching." Would that we could all receive this saying! Then preaching would convey to us far more substantial benefit than it often does, and we should learn far more truly and wisely to honour it as an ordinance of Christ.

They who are appointed to minister in Christ's name, if they conceive rightly of their office, and of the promise of their Lord's presence with their ministrations, will find a peculiar satisfaction in those parts of their service which are most purely ministerial, in which they have but to do Christ's plain bidding, to be the organs by which His words are spoken, His acts performed. For here they feel that they are most surely channels of His grace to hearts prepared to receive it; here the heavenly treasure, though it be in earthen vessels, suffers least alloy; man's frailty and error have least occasion given them to mar the work of God. So are those parts of a minister's work, which human reason might account to be the lowest, indeed the highest; here, as elsewhere, has God given more abundant honour to that part which lacked; those duties of our office which least require natural ability, intellectual gifts, are those which, rightly understood, most clearly testify that God "has empowered us to be ministers of the new covenant." The administration of the sacraments of Christ, the office of declaring and pronouncing, in His name, to the penitent, the absolution and remission of their



sins, the offering of appointed prayers, the uttering of appointed benedictions—these duties afford a peculiar satisfaction to the Christian minister, inasmuch as they are simple acts, performed in no wise of his own mind, and for that cause to be more distinctly recognized as the work of Christ done by his hands, as the word of Christ spoken by his mouth.

On the other hand, while he accounts himself, in preaching and teaching, to be still the minister of Christ, to be speaking in God's behalf, he will here find far more reason to confess his sins, his negligences and ignorances, far more reason to fear lest error of judgment, or prejudice, or want of purity of intention, may have hindered his working his Lord's will, and impaired the blessing which his ministration was designed to convey.

We may all be assured, both ministers and people, that we shall serve God by preaching, and be built up by preaching in our most holy faith, in proportion as we learn to honour and value aright the several portions of the worship of Almighty God; and, again, that these are to be honoured and valued aright, only by referring them to the promised presence of our Lord. The recognition of that sacred presence will shed a hallowing light upon all the services of the house of God; they will all be accounted precious and holy as being means of fellowship with Christ, and that will be esteemed most precious, most holy, in

which He vouchsafes us the nearest access to Himself.

Our own experience can scarcely have failed to teach us how lamentably easy it is to form, and to rest in, a most unworthy estimate of the privileges which we enjoy as members of the Christian Church, and, in our own mistaken apprehension, to relieve ourselves of the burden of responsibility, by disowning the great things which God from day to day is doing for us. We are but too willing by any means to escape from the consciousness of inconsistency. Comparing our habitual conduct with an elevated conception of our advantages and of our duties, as God's servants and as worshippers in His house, and seeing too plainly the startling discrepancy between the one and the other, we are tempted, if it may be, to debase the heavenly things to our earthly level, rather than encounter the arduous and humiliating task of abandoning our earthborn habits and affections for others which are more in accordance with our Christian profession and with the exalted language of our services.

Yet how very pitiable must be the condition of any man, who possesses externally the privileges of the Christian Church, while he remains unconscious of their priceless value; how wretched to awaken hereafter to the consciousness that we had long been ignorantly walking, blinded by the deceits of Satan and of the world, in the midst of Christian light;

enrolled by God's grace among the members of His household, yet careless of appropriating its blessings—aliens in heart and life, and so destined to be aliens for ever.

Strive we, then, to apprehend the reality of the language of Holy Writ concerning the kingdom of Christ, the reality of the language which the Church commends to our use in the public service of God. In spite of every hindrance, let us earnestly endeavour more fully to recognize the sacred character of that access to the Father which our Lord has purchased for us, the solemnity of that intercourse with Heaven which is designed to elevate and purify our daily intercourse with our fellow-men; and to receive, in all its simplicity, in all its fulness, the declaration of the text, that "where two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ, there is He in the midst of them."

## SERMON XVI.

PREACHED IN TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL ON JUNE  
26, 1853, BEING THE LAST SUNDAY IN THE  
ACADEMICAL YEAR.

*For the Fifth Sunday after Trinity.*

1 SAMUEL xv. 23.—“Because thou hast rejected the word of  
the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king.”

AMONG the many mournful histories which Holy Scripture presents to our notice, the history of Saul is one of the most mournful. Possessed of many admirable endowments, both of body and of mind, he claims at first our warm esteem and love; and, as his day becomes overcast with the clouds of guilt and of misfortune, we can by no means divest ourselves of the interest which was awakened by the gladsome promise of its morning. For, in the midst of error and of consequent misery, he still gives tokens, ever and anon, of the virtue of past days. To adopt the language of our great poet respecting the fallen archangel—

“His form has not yet lost  
All her original brightness.”

We cannot listen without emotion to the remorseful confession wrung from him by the generous forbearance of the object of his bitter persecution: "I have sinned: return, my son David: for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and erred exceedingly." And, even at the very close of his career, his pathetic complaint to Samuel argues a heart in no sense "past feeling," still deeply conscious of the happiness which he might have enjoyed, of the misery which he had brought upon himself: "I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams."

If it be asked what occasioned the wreck of a character so noble, we may perhaps arrive at a solution of this question most safely and readily, by contrasting the conduct of Saul with that of him whom God chose on his rejection. On the occasion of Saul's first transgression, Samuel said to him, "The Lord hath sought Him a man after His own heart;" and when he again offended more grievously the second time, the prophet said, "The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it unto a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou." We readily conclude from these utterances of the prophet that, in respect of Saul's great failing,

David did stand, and would prove himself to stand, in marked contrast with his predecessor. The history of both will, as I think, enable us to arrive at the conclusion that Saul's great error was a proud indisposition to recognize and appreciate his relation to God, while David's peculiar excellence was a faithful and loving readiness to do so. The virtues of Saul seem to have been the results of an ingenuous natural disposition, rather than the fruits of a superinduced religious principle; their aim appears to have been earthward rather than heavenward; they seem to have respected man rather than God. These natural graces of character might, indeed, have been elevated into something far higher and nobler; God's choice of Saul might have led Saul to choose the Lord for his God—might have sublimed his diffidence into reverent humility, his generosity into beneficence and long-suffering, his courage into zeal. And no doubt herein his trial consisted. God proved him by his grace—chose him to be king, that he might thereby become, in a higher and holier sense, the chosen of the Lord. Yet such was not the result. Saul did not loyally recognize his relation to the Great King of Israel, plainly as that relation had been stated by the prophet both to the people and to himself; he would not be God's vicegerent; he must be king in his own right. At one moment human fear, at another human pride, makes him feel God's service to be a

burdensome restraint, or rather, perhaps, to doubt whether he will not be serving God and Israel best, by following the devices of his own heart and by obeying his own impulses.

How widely different was the conduct of David, even from his earliest days! Throughout the whole course of his changeful life, we find him ever keenly sensible of his relation to God; ever referring to Him his thoughts, his words, his actions; ever conscious of the divine presence; ever persuaded of the claims of the Almighty to his service, both as a man and as a prince.

So, in the wilderness with his father's sheep, he feels and confesses that it is the Lord who "has delivered him out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear;" and when he goes up to the army to his brethren, he sees in the gigantic and boastful champion of the enemy only "this uncircumcised Philistine," recognizing him by no tokens save those which declared him to be an alien from the covenant, while the dismayed and humbled ranks of his own countrymen are still, in his faithful eyes, "the armies of the living God." So, too, in advancing to the unequal conflict, he needed not, on his behalf, an entreaty like that of the prophet for his servant, "Lord, I pray Thee, open his eyes that he may see;" for he too was, like Balaam, though in a better sense, "the man whose eyes were open;" and sword and

shield and spear, in the hands of Goliath, were as nothing before the might by which he felt himself to be encompassed—"the name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel." Again, under widely differing circumstances, his relentless persecutor was, both in the cave and sleeping within the trench, in his faithful regard, "the anointed of the Lord;" and, when Shimei curses him, in the hour of his distress, he confesses that it is done at God's bidding.

Herein, then, would seem to lie the broad line of distinction between the character of Saul and that of David, that the latter had ever a vivid consciousness of things unseen—of his relation to God—while in the former this was wanting. And this grievous defect led Saul to reject the word of the Lord on two several occasions and in two distinct modes.

First, in the matter of the burnt offering, Saul rejected God's written Word, the recognized law of the Most High. The pressure of a supposed necessity induced him to trespass on an office which pertained to the priests alone, to be guilty of an offence akin to that for which Korah perished; and, again, in spite of the grave warning which had followed upon this offence, Saul rejected God's word addressed to him by Samuel, with regard to the Amalekites. He put his own interpretation upon that word, and would probably have remained wholly unconscious of disobedience, had it not been for the expostulation of the



prophet, which expostulation itself he at first repelled as groundless. And it is well that we should observe this, for we probably fail to derive from the narratives of Holy Scripture the instruction which they should convey, in consequence of our not forming a correct judgment of the circumstances of the principal actors in those narratives. The position of men living under the Jewish dispensation was, indeed, not precisely similar to ours, in respect of their means of apprehending their relation to God and their consequent duty, yet was it not so wholly unlike ours as we may be apt to think it to have been. Saul, we might be disposed to say, openly set at nought the commandment of God in a way in which we cannot do so; he knew that God had spoken to him through the prophet, and he refused to comply with the instruction thus given. Would it not, however, seem far more probable that Saul was wanting in faith, than that he was guilty of this open and presumptuous disobedience?—that he trifled with God's command as he did, because he regarded it as being in reality the command of Samuel; and that nothing was further from his thought than that the prophet, amid the general excitement and enthusiasm consequent upon a signal victory, would ever raise a question as to his literal compliance with instructions, which, so far as their general scope was concerned, had been executed with so brilliant a success? He had not probably

apprehended, with any clearness, the nature of his commission, or the import of the words, afterwards used by Samuel, "The Lord sent thee on a journey;" he had, as he deemed, gone on an expedition, at the suggestion and with the approval of his chief counsellor. He had not heard the voice from heaven, "Go, and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites;" he had heard only its earthborn echo, "Go, and utterly humble the hereditary enemies of Israel." The theocracy was, in Saul's apprehension, a name rather than a reality, and he interpreted the solemn terms in which Samuel recognized the divine government of Israel, and his own consequent obligations, as lightly as we too often interpret the sacred words which declare to us our privileges and duties under the new covenant—the import of our "high calling of God in Christ Jesus." So it was, as he regarded it, not God's quarrel, but Israel's and his own, that he was avenging; well content, indeed, that valour should be imputed to him as piety, that patriotism should be honoured as religion, but little disposed to remember that he was waging, like Joshua, "the wars of the Lord" against persons and things accursed, and that that which God had appointed to utter destruction might be spared neither to grace his own triumph nor to enrich his soldiery.

Holy Scripture so completely strips men's conduct of all specious disguises, tells us the truth concerning

them so barely, that we may hastily infer that their errors were not cloaked in any degree either from others or from themselves, that conscious and overt rebellion against God brought on them a guilt with which but few in our own days seem to be chargeable. We may, however, far more reasonably believe that men like Saul sinned as men ordinarily sin now, by choosing not to know the truth, not to ascertain their duty, not to realize their relation to God and their consequent obligations, "not regarding," as the prophet says, "the work of the Lord, nor considering the operation of His hands."

Thus regarded, the sin and punishment of Saul cannot fail to convey grave lessons to ourselves; for, if he sinned thus, we must surely acknowledge our grievous liability to sin after the similitude of his transgression. We may sin against the written law of Christ as he sinned against the written law of Moses, not by openly disallowing its authority, but by doubting and practically denying its universal applicability to our own conduct. We may also reject the word of the Lord as he did in the case of Amalek—no written word of general application, but a special word addressed to ourselves, such as Saul heard from the lips of Samuel. We have, indeed, no inspired prophet to bear to us individually the messages of Heaven; and therefore the word of God cannot come to us in so obvious, so palpable a form as it did to Saul; but

it may come to us no less surely. God's providence may as distinctly call us to the performance of certain special duties, as the voice of Samuel called Saul to smite the Amalekites. We should also be careful to observe that, in many instances, God's supernatural communications did but carry a little further, and make more definite, the instruction which He evermore conveys in ordinary modes. So, when Samuel bade Saul undertake this war, he was but assuring him of a duty which the past history of his people and their present position might of themselves have indicated to a faithful and thoughtful mind. "The Lord," as the books of Moses taught, "had sworn that He would have war with Amalek from generation to generation:" and those books also recorded a special charge which had been given to Israel, that "when the Lord had given them rest from all their enemies round about, they should blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven." Saul's victories over the Moabites, the children of Ammon, Edom, the Philistines, and also over Amalek itself, had placed the people, for the first time since their entrance into Canaan, in a position to fulfil this command. Thus both God's word and God's providence might have spoken to the heart of Saul the selfsame message which he heard from the lips of Samuel, and Samuel's message might have been doubly confirmed by a reference both to the written law and to the existing circumstances of the time.

Let us, then, inquire what the word of God is to us, as uttered by His providence, and more especially to those amongst us who are passing through a course of study here. The slighting of God's providential voice is, as I believe, a serious error to which we are very prone. We allow that the Bible is God's Word, we admit certain propositions as necessary matters of faith, we allow certain rules of conduct to be generally binding on all men; but we are very apt to disregard the manner in which the providence of Almighty God interprets to each one among us his own special duties, and brings the general precepts of the gospel to bear on his own conduct as an individual. Are we not, indeed, conscious of a strange kind of misbelief, which teaches us to regard the power which prescribes to us general rules of conduct, as a power distinct from that which appoints the circumstances of our daily life? Do we not even vainly fancy that our external condition is simply inimical to our spiritual well-being, and that we would readily serve God did we but breathe a purer atmosphere, were we but engaged in pursuits more congenial to our better feelings? So men learn to postpone the purpose of godly living, to excuse themselves in negligence and disobedience, solely on the ground that they have been placed in an unfavourable position, or that they are associated with ensnaring society. We may, indeed, *place ourselves* where we ought not to be, and mix with those whom

we ought to shun ; but, in the main, our lot is not ordered by ourselves, we find ourselves under a guidance not our own, and it becomes us to ask ourselves *whose* that guidance is, and to what end it is vouchsafed.

So far as those whom I am addressing are concerned, there can be no difficulty in referring their present external circumstances to the good providence of God. He, by the hand of parents or of friends, has led them where they are ; and when we consider how many independent agencies have combined to form for them their present position and to establish them in it, we cannot but feel that it becomes them to think with all reverence of the advantages, the duties, the engagements, connected with that position—yes, even of its difficulties and dangers, as constituting a part of the discipline to which He, “ who ordereth all things in heaven and earth,” has seen good to subject them. It is a thought which ought to impress us very deeply, that God surely meant every one of us to be doing the duties here prescribed for us, to be exercising our understandings and disciplining our wills as we are here required to do ; and that, in so far as sloth or levity may induce us, on any one day, to omit the day’s tasks or to violate the rules prescribed for our conduct, in that degree we are rejecting the word of the Lord, by which He speaks to us, in His providence, as members of this society. Let us bear this in mind,

for we are far too prone to escape from this sense of obligation to discharge special duties, and to shelter ourselves under the pretext of respecting general rules. A man may say, "I know that it is my duty to serve God," and yet may have no reasonable, no honest reply to give to the inquiry, "How are you to serve Him *to-day*?"

Indeed, some may fancy that they have not yet arrived at the proper season for rendering this service; may persuade themselves that classical and mathematical studies are but hindrances in the way of their so doing; or, again, that the preparatory study of divinity is far less favourable to a religious life than are the practical duties of a parish priest. And so, in the far horizon, until they reach it, lies the happy spot, where it is to be so very easy and so very delightful to listen to the voice of God. Until they reach it, I say; for the holiest life which man ever led on earth, is ever beset with encumbrances and distractions no less grievous than any of which they may now complain. The service which, viewed as a whole, appeared so inviting at a distance, will present, in its component parts, on a nearer view, much which is very distasteful and very wearisome, much which it will be difficult for a self-indulgent or faithless heart to recognize as constituting any portion of the duty which it owes to Almighty God.

The day's work, then, which is enjoined on us or

recommended to us, in our several stations, by lawful authority, this it is which the word of God's providence is bidding us do; and let us never forget in what gentle, hopeful tones that word ordinarily speaks to us in our early days. How large are its promises, how encouraging its suggestions, how very light the burden it imposes!

The pleasurable exercise of our faculties, rewarded by our own consciousness of good desert, by the approbation of superiors, by the affectionate sympathy of friends and relatives, this is the task to which God's providential word invites those whom I am now addressing. That voice must hereafter call them to duties sterner than these, to duties which we cannot hope successfully to undertake if we shall have failed in our less arduous probation.

And remember again how brief the time is during which we can enjoy our present advantages, and how needful it is, therefore, with Christian resolution and perseverance, to redeem that time.

We look back on three years of schoolboy life as a period indefinitely long, and we are apt to think that, in the three years of our college course, we may accomplish whatever we please; and so over-confidence is too often permitted to betray us into dejection and disappointment: we waste the morning hours, and learn too late that it is in the morning that the day's work must begin. The close of a single year may,



however, teach us how soon the three years must end, and may warn us that each must leave its own proper task completed, if our work is not to grow hopelessly upon our hands.

And let us still remember that our work is God's work, and that the question is not whether we will acquit ourselves or no of some self-imposed task, but whether we will do that which God, by His various gifts of capacity, of time, of opportunity, of encouragement and assistance, is loudly calling upon us to accomplish. Let us remember, moreover, how momentous an influence upon our future life must, in all probability, be exerted by our conduct here. We might well value these brief years of study on the sole ground of the effect which they will surely produce, according to the manner in which they are passed, upon our moral and intellectual character. But, besides this, they are of fearful importance, as determining, to a large extent, our future position and prospects in life. We may have cause, in years far distant, to call to mind, for joy or sorrow, the days which we have spent here; to recognize, with gratitude or with self-reproach, the tokens which they have left behind them. We may find ourselves judged again and again by that record, reaping again and again, when we little expected it, the harvest of that youthful seed-time. And is this thought full of fear? Let us remember that it is full of hope also; that God meant it to be full of hope to

us; that He would invite us, under the blended influence of that hope and fear, to redeem this thrice precious time.

But, again, let us remember that a just appreciation of our relation to God, a right understanding of His providential word addressed to us, must wholly forbid our entertaining the wayward design of making no effort to retrieve past neglect. We may be conscious of not having put in practice good resolutions, of having abandoned plans of self-improvement which we laid down for ourselves on coming hither; and unless a very strong sense of duty be interposed, the painful conviction that time and opportunity have been lost, is more likely to check than to stimulate future effort.

But a serious remembrance of our duty to God, of the demand which He makes upon us as the objects of His providential care, will prevent this disastrous result. We have *still* His will to obey, His work to do; we have still the hope of not wasting *all* our seed-time, still the wholesome fear of adding sin to sin.

And here, too, Saul may be a lesson to us. He fell once, but he was put on a new trial. Had he passed through that successfully, though his kingdom was not to be established for ever, yet his life and his death might have been widely different from what they were. But in the second trial he was again found wanting, and then came the terrible words—"The Lord hath

rejected thee from being king;" "The Lord hath rent the kingdom from thee this day." Saul could not endure this word, and we should take warning from his story. There is a joyous, hopeful, easy service, which the young heart may gladly render, if it will but resolve not to clog itself with errors and offences. There is a voice of God which it is a delight to obey—a voice which summons to useful and honourable exertion, to the exercise of powers which have been strengthened and disciplined by intellectual and moral culture: but, if this voice be disregarded, then there comes a sadder and a sterner voice, bidding us gather up the fragments lest all be lost; bidding us serve God with the poor residue of our wasted strength, with the gleanings of our squandered opportunities; bidding us serve Him in some lower room, with far less delight, with far greater toil.

To Saul this voice came, and he would not endure to hear it. And here it is worthy of all observation how God condescended to soften, to his proud and wayward spirit, the bitterness of his humiliation. It is, indeed, most remarkable that his destined successor should have become in turn the soother of his melancholy, his armour-bearer, his deliverer from the enemy, his son-in-law, and the bosom friend of him who, as Saul had hoped, should have reigned in his stead. These appointments of God's providence, coupled with the fact that both to Saul and to Jonathan was known

the divine purpose of exalting David to the kingdom, would surely intimate that God was still offering to the fallen monarch once more peace with Heaven and with himself, and was inviting him, by the attractive virtues of the son of Jesse, by his daughter's love for her husband, and by Jonathan's generous devotion to his friend, to embrace the dreaded intruder into his regal office, in the person of a brave and faithful subject, of a noble and affectionate son, and to bless Heaven that its mercy had thus kindly tempered the bitter cup, which could not pass away from him except he drank it.

We can scarcely escape the conclusion that such was the gracious purpose of God; that *this* word of God was also uttered in the ear of Saul, and that he rejected it. Let us remember, then, while there is yet time to profit by the remembrance, how very hard it is to listen to a word like this; how hard to learn that cherished hopes are gone for ever, and gone through our own fault; how hard to submit to serve God in some far lower place than that which we might have occupied, under disadvantages and difficulties which must evermore painfully remind us of past offences and neglects. This is a temptation into which we must earnestly pray God not to lead us, into which we must be very careful not to plunge ourselves.

What can be more sad than to trace this downward course in the instance of another? What more pitiable

than to find a man compelled to draw this torturing contrast between what he might have been and what he is? And, in our own instance, how can we possibly anticipate what may be the ultimate result of that fiery trial if it should overtake us—whether we shall be content, under its pressure, to “go softly all our days in the bitterness of our soul,” or whether we shall spurn at the rod as Saul did, and choose to forget God and to hate man, rather than acknowledge our own transgression?

Fearful, indeed, is the danger of making for ourselves a past on which we dare not look; and surely we all know enough of that hatred of the light, which is the consequence of evil-doing, to lead us to seek earnestly of Almighty God that He would keep us from accumulating for ourselves bitter recollections, which may hereafter affright us from the necessary duty of calling our own ways to remembrance, and thus shut us out alike from true repentance and from the hope of pardon and restoration.

So solemn, then, is God's providential voice to any who are enjoying the advantage of intellectual and moral preparation for the duties of maturer life; but let us remember, also, that His providence addresses a special word to us, as members of a college lately founded, and still awaiting the development of its system, and the establishment of its hold upon the sympathy and the confidence of the Church.

The events of the academical year,\* which is now closing, can scarcely have failed to impress every one amongst us. We do, no doubt, all feel, more or less, the responsibility which attaches to us as members of a foundation which has awakened so much kindly interest, and called forth so much Christian liberality. In looking at the grey walls of ancient collegiate institutions at home, one has often dreamt that the days in which they were reared must have been days of more fervent piety than the present, and that, had we lived in those days, we should indeed have admired and loved our founders and benefactors. Let us, then, remember that, before our eyes, a like charitable work is being carried out, that we have seen it progressing step by step, that we are witnesses of the generous desire to perfect it.

Is there not a special word of God addressed to us, as those who are enjoying the fruits of that wise and liberal spirit with which He has animated the founders and benefactors of this society?

Ought we not all earnestly to resolve that, by God's help, nothing shall be wanting on our part to further their pious aims, that nothing shall be done on our part to counteract and disappoint them? Nor let us forget that this responsibility is shared by a number comparatively small, and that consequently a greater importance attaches to the conduct of each—to his

\* See note at the end of the sermon.

example whether of evil or of good. We shall feel, no doubt, in years to come—I trust that we feel now—that the zealous and patient exertions of the bishop of this diocese on our behalf, his lively interest in everything which concerns our welfare, bring us under a peculiar obligation to seek the prosperity of the college for his sake, and to strive that, so long as God shall spare him to the Church, he may see here much cause for joy and thankfulness, small occasion for anxiety or disquietude.

Once more, there is a providential word of God to us as members of a *Church* university. The Church, alas! has ever been, and must ever be, till the end, an exclusive term; let us not forget that it is also an inclusive term, and that its pale may be wider than our charities. God forbid that we should ever, under the pretence of charity, be guilty of the most uncharitable act of surrendering or compromising any catholic truth; but let the very appellation *Catholic* remind us in what spirit such truths must be maintained, with what aim they must be confessed. We must learn to love truth reverently and modestly for its own sake; we must learn to confess it in its proper place, in its due proportion, and in a becoming temper. Men will listen to the teaching of earnest piety, when the selfsame doctrine, from the noisy disputant or the subtle controversialist, would but perplex or offend them. The holiest truths may be profaned by the

advocacy of an unchastened spirit. We may hold them, catholic as they are, in a schismatical—yes, even in an heretical spirit, cherishing them as badges of party strife, and as being antagonistic, in our esteem, to other truths, with which they are yet in perfect harmony.

It is a matter of great satisfaction to have witnessed the general interest discovered in the college by the clergy of this diocese. Let it be our care to cherish that interest, to do nothing causelessly to chill it, seeking to belong to no party, but to the Church of Christ, and to avow our belief and express our convictions, as duty shall suggest and occasion require, not for the purpose of repelling, but with the desire of winning, others. The truths which we hold in common with other members of our own communion, should be made the basis of a more complete and cordial unity with them; and we must patiently and cheerfully meet, on that common ground, men whose tastes and opinions may harmonize but little with our own.

God grant us evermore the hearing ear, the understanding and obedient heart, that we may never reject His word, as Saul did; and so may escape the misery of being rejected by Him from that high and holy relation to himself, which was but dimly foreshadowed in the honours and privileges enjoyed by the King of Israel.



NOTE.—In the early part of 1853 the Rev. Wm. McMurray, D.D. (now Archdeacon of Niagara), completed a tour in the United States on behalf of Trinity College. The members of the sister Church in that country generously contributed nearly \$10,000 (£2000) in books and money. In April, 1853, Alexander Burnside, M.D., presented to the college the munificent sum of \$24,000 in lands and money, with a portion of which two scholarships bearing his name were endowed.

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## SERMON XVII.

PREACHED IN TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL ON JUNE  
28, 1857, BEING THE LAST SUNDAY IN THE  
ACADEMICAL YEAR.

*For the Third Sunday after Trinity.*

1 SAMUEL ii. 17.—“Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord: for men abhorred the offering of the Lord.”

WE have been reading this morning of the grievous offences of Hophni and Phinehas, the sons of Eli; offences by which they desecrated God's holy place and profaned the ordinances of His service. In the text the magnitude of their transgression is marked by the fearful results which followed from it; their “sin” is said to have been “very great before the Lord,” because “men abhorred the offering of the Lord.” We must, however, be careful to observe that the consequences of their iniquity are, probably, thus made the measure of its guilt, only because those consequences were natural and all but inevitable—the legitimate fruits of their conduct—a harvest of

evil, which reason and conscience would have taught them most assuredly to anticipate from the corrupt seed which they had sown. We have, indeed, no reason whatever to suppose that the Almighty estimates the criminality of conduct by results of a more accidental nature. Some very grievous consequence may occasionally follow from an act of sin not only without the design, but to the bitter regret, of the offender; and although instances of this kind may serve the wholesome end of opening our eyes to the danger of doing anything whatever in violation of the holy law of God, yet it cannot be supposed for a moment that any such fortuitous result can stamp a sinful act with greater guilt than that which would have attached to it had no such result followed. We must therefore bear in mind that the sin of Hophni and Phinehas "was very great before the Lord," because the abhorrence of His offering on the part of the outraged worshippers was its natural consequence, a consequence which the profane priests could not but have anticipated, and which they had learned to contemplate with indifference. We must also remember that "the state of life to which it had pleased God to call them" was in every way calculated to awaken their conscience—to quicken their moral perceptions—in respect of the point in question. They could not easily be blind to the meaning of those services which it was their duty to administer; they could

not easily see their fellow-countrymen coming up, in obedience to the divine command, to "the place which the Lord their God had chosen," bringing thither "their burnt offerings, their sacrifices, their tithes, and the heave offerings of their hand, and all their choice vows which they vowed unto the Lord," without being forcibly reminded of the sacred import of these acts of duty, of the spiritual worship which they were in all cases designed to exhibit, and in many instances did actually express. The joyous peace offering, the penitential sin or trespass offering, the vow gladly paid by the thankful worshipper whose heart was yet softened by the fresh memory of pain or sorrow, would each have a voice of its own for an understanding and obedient priest; he would sympathize with the people between whom and their God he was commissioned to stand; and the earnest desire of his heart would be that nothing might be lacking on his part which might render the solemn service of the tabernacle more profitable to the worshipper, or more acceptable to Him who had condescended to dwell between the cherubim.

Nor have we reason to suppose that, in the instance of the sons of Eli, such early teaching had been wanting, as might have prepared them at a maturer age to think and feel rightly respecting their holy duties. Eli was, probably, an over-indulgent parent; yet his words and acts, as they are recorded

in Holy Scripture, would lead us to conclude that he was personally a faithful and devout servant of God, one from whose example and instruction his sons might have learned to be far other than they were. Yet these unhappy men were indeed "sons of Belial; they knew not the Lord;" the sacred and honourable services to which they had been called inspired them with no pure or elevated sentiments; their least criminal thoughts were but of the flesh-hook and of the roast, and Israel was taught to loathe those hallowed rites which were defiled by the profanity and the impurity of the priests of the Most High.

It may appear at first sight that from so melancholy a story of irreligion and profligacy we, happily, have but little to learn; and this might gladly be conceded, if the sacred narrative were calculated to teach us nothing more than to abstain from following the example of Hophni and Phinehas in all its grossness. But the truth is that we have far more than this to learn from the lesson of to-day. The same voice which condemns the offences of the sons of Eli, commends to us also the highest rule of duty; the man of God, who came to the aged high priest, did not merely denounce the grievous sin, of which his family had been actually guilty, and which is characterized as "kicking at" God's "sacrifice and offering;" he also reminded Eli of what his household should have been, by speaking of the "faithful

priest" whom the Lord should "raise up," and who should do "according to all that was in His heart and in His mind." Moreover, living, as by God's grace we do, under the new covenant, we must liberally interpret the instructions of the old, according to the spirit rather than the letter, in the form of positive rather than of negative laws. This mode of interpretation is adopted, both by our Blessed Lord and by His apostle, in respect of the Decalogue. Our Lord Himself, in the Sermon on the Mount, proves the wide-extending range of the commandments; and although He still adheres mainly to the negative form, yet by proving that they exclude evil in every shape, whether of thought, word, or deed, He indicates with sufficient clearness that the law which prohibits all which is evil, does indeed enjoin the practice of all that is good. S. Paul, also, in the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, most instructively develops the prohibitory injunctions of the law of Mount Sinai into the hortatory precepts of the law of Mount Sion, showing that the eighth commandment invites not only to honest labour but to almsgiving, and the seventh to a pure and wholesome conversation.

Again, when the apostle speaks, in the same chapter, of the Gentiles "who, being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness," we shall lose the better part of the instruction which his words convey, if we suppose that the absence of feeling—the

deadness of the moral sense—of which he speaks must necessarily discover itself by the same abandoned profligacy which was its ordinary token in the ancient Gentile world. There may be among us a bluntness of the moral perceptions as entire as theirs was, which yet leads to no such results in our conduct; because God has, in His mercy, abated, by the moral teaching of His gospel and by the example of His Church, the evil even of the world; and has thus taught even those, who do not acknowledge the authority of their Redeemer or their Sanctifier, to denounce and punish the gross vices which the pagan world not only practised but approved.

In order, therefore, fully to appropriate the lessons of the old covenant or the precepts of the gospel, we must carefully remember the position which we occupy, we must thoughtfully consider what will be required of us as Christians by that God who visited with His heavy displeasure those who sinned against the feebler light whether of the Mosaic revelation or of the natural law written in the heart. And, besides, how are we to escape the danger of becoming even such persons as Hophni and Phinehas were, how are we to escape the danger of falling even into the vices of heathenism, except by striving to do the will of God from the heart? Men are not their own masters. There are two masters whom, as our Lord has told us, we may in vain attempt to serve simultaneously,

but He does not speak of the possibility of being exempt from the service of both. And even if we could be thus exempt, thus free to work our own sole pleasure, what can be conceived to be a greater affront to the majesty of Almighty God than that a man should deliberately resolve, for his own sake, to abstain from evil in its grosser forms, to consult his present personal welfare and the good opinion of his fellow-men by maintaining a moderation and decency of conduct, and yet to withhold from the Maker and Saviour of his soul and body that sacrifice of both to His service which is indeed "most meet and right" ?

And now to apply these observations to the instance before us. Let us not imagine that thoughts should not arise in our hearts as we read the story of Hephni and Phinehas, even though we may look upon their conduct with abhorrence, and have good reason to trust that we may never be partakers in their specific offences. We may regard their conduct as reprov'd both by a negative and by a positive precept, and under the terms of each of these precepts we shall find that we have much to lay to heart. And, first, the negative precept which we may regard as being implied in the narrative before us, is this, "Thou shalt not cause men to abhor the offering of the Lord." Many of those who are present are destined for the sacred ministry, and to them I would in the first instance address myself. Let, then, those of us who



are now in Holy Orders, or who purpose to receive them, hereafter, bear in mind this negative precept, and remember that it may be violated by transgressions very different in degree, and even in kind, from those external acts of which the sons of Eli were guilty. Their sins were those of a rude age, of men of coarse minds; and we are too apt to consider that in this rudeness, in this coarseness, lies the gravamen of their offence. We are willing to resent the outrage which is offered to the decencies of society—to that decorum which man now exacts from his fellow, and consents in his own person to observe; but we are too prone to neglect the important inquiry whether the same renunciation of allegiance to Almighty God, the same “contempt of His word and commandment,” may not be discovered in a more specious form, under a more plausible exterior. What were the sins of Hophni and Phinehas in the abstract, detached from the external acts by which they were discovered? What were they in their essence, abstracted from their separable accidents? They were the selfish love of gain, and the selfish love of pleasure. Thus stated, we see at once that the sins of these unhappy men are not to be put aside as sins to which we are in no wise liable, with which we have no concern. They are sins to which fallen man is prone in every age and in every clime, however their outward manifestation may be modified in deference to the

opinions of society, or in compliance with those moral instincts which may exist in a heart which is not possessed by the love and fear of God.

First, then, the love of gain, exhibited by Christian ministers, may cause men to abhor the offering of the Lord. The religious may be offended, the doubtful and faint-hearted discouraged and repelled, the worldly minded confirmed in their contempt for holy things, by finding that they who minister in those holy things are no less sordid, no less selfish than others who stand aloof and profess no regard for religion. The devout may be sick at heart, and sorrowfully avow that they can find little or no comfort in means of grace in which they would otherwise heartily delight; the doubting soul may be led to arrive at a most unhappy solution of its doubts; the heart to which God has spoken, and which has been reluctantly listening to His voice, may be aided in arriving at the false conclusion that it has been only beguiled by gloomy delusions, by unreal and groundless apprehensions; and the hardened worldling may be made yet more hardened, and be enabled effectually to deaden the consciences of others, inasmuch as a plausible pretext is afforded him for repeating his favourite maxims, that religion is but a name—that, fair as it may be in theory, there never yet was a human heart which was honestly subject to its influence. Let us remember that a worldly spirit in

a clergyman, an undue desire of aggrandizement, a keen pursuit of temporal advancement, a preference of personal interests to higher claims and duties, any approximation, indeed, to the unscrupulous and disingenuous policy of the slave of mammon, flows from the same evil source, and leads to the same disastrous results, with the sordid covetousness of the sons of Eli.

But, again, there is a selfish love of pleasure which is most unworthy of the character of a Christian minister, and most fatal to his usefulness. The ministers of the Church are set apart to holy functions; they have sacred and solemn duties to perform, and they must be content themselves to stand aloof from those follies which it is their office to reprove—from those vanities which they are bound to represent as ensnaring. Their parochial ministrations, if they are duly discharged, bring them constantly in contact with scenes of sorrow, with spectacles of sickness and mortality; those sad realities, which the great mass of men may forget till personal experience forces them upon their attention, are habitually before the eyes of a minister of Christ; and he must indeed be most unworthy of his office, if he does not find that the contemplation of so many of the bitter consequences of sin habitually sobers his mind, and disposes him to seek some other refreshment than that which is to be derived from the frivolous amusements or the heartless dissipation of the world. Nor should a minister con-

sult only the dictates of his own heart; he should remember also the effect which may be produced on others. Men will not always judge him fairly, they will sometimes feel a strong temptation to do otherwise; it will often be a great relief to them to infer from his appearance amid the gaieties of the world, and from his demeanour in general society, that he is but a dissembler when he preaches to them of "righteousness, soberness, and judgment to come." There may be some who will complain of undue reserve, but reserve will generally command respect; while it will be hard indeed to maintain that respect unimpaired, if we consent to mix habitually in societies whither our ministerial office does not call us, and where it will be difficult in any way to assert it, or to avail ourselves of its protection. Laymen not unfrequently complain that familiar intercourse with the clergy destroys or seriously impairs the satisfaction which they had derived from the discharge of their official duties; and this disappointment may well be supposed to result, in most instances at least, not so much from their discovering in the clergy any very serious faults of character, as from their seeing them at great disadvantage, and in a false position. When we are in deep sorrow, in grievous sickness, on the bed of death, to whom would we rather have recourse as our spiritual guide—to him who lived a simple and secluded life, patiently treading his prescribed path of duty, or to

the gay companion of our leisure hours, with whom we had often trifled and laughed, and who had often, perhaps, awakened within us a pleased surprise that a minister of the Church could so thoroughly accommodate himself to the tone and spirit of the world? There is a love of pleasure, a conformity to secular fashions and principles, which must necessarily lower a clergyman's apprehension of the duties of his office; must degrade, beyond all estimate, the opinion which those with whom he associates entertain of Christian belief and duty; and must therefore merit, in its degree, the selfsame reproof which Eli addressed to his sons: "It is no good report which I hear; ye make the Lord's people to transgress."

But it is time to proceed to the positive precept involved in the text. It not only says to every minister of God, "Thou shalt not cause men to abhor the offering of the Lord;" it says also, "Thou shalt instruct and invite men to love and honour the offering of the Lord." And if we will but give ear to this positive precept, we shall not be under the law of the negative precept; if we will but do what we ought to do, there will be little fear of our doing what we ought not. Real devotion to the duties of our sacred calling will lift us far above the sphere of those temptations by yielding to which that sacred calling is disgraced. But how are we thus to instruct and invite men to love and honour the offering of the Lord? First, by a due dis-

charge of our public duties. Much is, indeed, left to the individual here. God's service is, to a great extent, what we make it, in the esteem at least of the majority of those to whom we minister. We must, then, strive to bring prepared hearts to that service. It is not by a conventional solemnity of tone, by a superficial decency of behaviour, that we are to assist the devotion and to awaken the attention of those whom we are appointed to serve. It is by a simple, unaffected, heartfelt reverence, which no skill can possibly counterfeit, and which can result only from a settled persuasion of the truth of the great doctrines of our faith, and a devout recognition of the awful relation in which we stand to the Almighty, of the duty and service which we owe Him. Let us, then, ask of God that our hearts may ever be thus fixed when we utter the words of confession, of prayer, or of thanksgiving, or when we read the Holy Scriptures in the audience of His people. And let us remember, too, that the sermon is a part of divine service; that, as we are bound to read God's Holy Word with peculiar reverence, inasmuch as we rehearse, in His own presence, the words or works of the Great King, so, too, we speak in His name and in His presence when we preach in the congregation. This remembrance will prevent alike our over-estimating or undervaluing the sermon. It will exclude vain thoughts of it, as *our* word to the people; it will cherish reverent and solemn thoughts of it, as a word

of exhortation or instruction, which is spoken by divine appointment, and for which both we and our hearers will have to give account to God. Could we bear this ever in mind, the tone of our sermons would be insensibly elevated ; we should shrink from introducing into them terms and expressions borrowed from the secular language of the day ; our consciousness of the unseen presence would impart a chastened dignity to our style ; and whatever our intellectual acquirements might be, we should not fail to leave on the minds of our hearers the salutary conviction that we had given them the fruit of patient study, of a reverential and humble spirit, and of an earnest desire to glorify God and to edify His Church, by the declaration of Christian truth and the inculcation of Christian practice.

But, again, our private ministrations must also teach men to love and honour the offering of the Lord. There are, unhappily, those who will not learn this lesson in public till they are sought elsewhere. We must admonish in private those who do not frequent the house of God, those who do not receive the necessary means of grace provided under the new covenant ; we must be fellow-workers with God by the bed of sickness, and be diligent to sow the good seed in the fallow ground which He has mercifully broken up by the ploughshare of trial or affliction. And, again, if we use due diligence with the young, we may anticipate the growth of much evil, and teach them,

even for our own sakes, to love and honour the offering of God, before any bad advice or depraved example has taught them to abhor it.

Once more, our personal conduct must teach men this love, this honour, for God's holy things. Our responsibility here is great indeed. Many men will judge of God and of His truth by the standard of our conduct; many will charge our offences upon the doctrine which we teach, upon the Church which we serve, and turn away from the truth, by the knowledge of which God would have them to be saved, only because we are unworthy heralds of that truth. Let us think seriously of this responsibility, and let us pray God to give us grace "to show forth his praise, not only with our lips but in our lives." Faults and imperfections there must be in us and—daily sins and errors to be confessed and forsaken; but the grace of God, if we seek it, will assuredly enable us to leave this general conviction on the minds of men, that we are honest and true-hearted servants of God, that we believe the holy creed which we profess, that we strive to practise the holy precepts which we inculcate. The grace of God, if we diligently seek it, will at least enable us so to live that, when we are withdrawn from the scene of our labours, those to whom we have ministered may have a good hope that we are gone to our rest, and may heartily thank God that His providence ordained that our lot should be cast among them.



Let us, moreover, reflect what a blessed and glorious thing it is to have fulfilled this duty, to have accomplished this task, in any portion of Christ's Church, however remote, however rude, in which we have been called to labour. To have taught our fellow-men to love the house of God, to hallow His Holy Days, to frequent His ordinances; to have led them to recognize their high privileges as members of the Church of Christ, and faithfully and obediently to avail themselves of those privileges; to have warned them in danger, to have counselled them in difficulty, to have comforted them in sickness, to have smoothed the bed of death, to have refreshed the parting spirit with the words of holy prayer, with the blessed promises and life-sustaining gifts of Christ—is not this indeed angels' work, and has it not promised to it an angel's recompense, in the day when "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever"?

And, if we "trust that we are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon us this office and ministration," shall we hesitate to do so because the labour is great, and the temporal recompense miserably small? Let us not doubt that God will provide for those who undertake so solemn and self-denying a duty—who come forward to dispense, in the name of Christ, the means of grace to those who must other-

wise be destitute of them. If we have calmly counted the cost, and if our heart be indeed in the work, we need not fear that God will ever forsake those who have left all to follow Him.

I have been hitherto addressing myself exclusively to those who are at present serving in the sacred ministry of the Church, or are intending so to do. Let us not, however, forget that the text has a lesson which is common to us all. Hophni and Phinehas were distinguished from the great mass of their fellow-countrymen as being priests of the family of Aaron, yet God had instructed Moses to say to all the children of Israel without exception, "Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." And even so, while there are in the Christian Church, by divine appointment, ministers of different orders—bishops, priests, and deacons—the whole body of the Church is, in S. Peter's language, "an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Thus we may, all of us, as private members of the Church of Christ, be guilty of an offence analogous to that of Hophni and Phinehas; we may by impiety and sin teach men to hate and despise, for our sakes, the truth which we profess. On the other hand, the lay members of the Church, no less than the clergy, may, by a devout and consistent life, recommend religious truth to the love and reverence of others, and aid most effectually in extending a belief

in the doctrines, and obedience to the precepts, of our most holy faith.

Let us all alike remember that God has called us to the discharge of this duty ; and more especially let every one who has been admitted into this college bear in mind that his position, as a member of the Anglican branch of the Church Catholic, and the special benefits which he enjoys as a member of this society, lay him under a solemn obligation to bring no discredit either upon the faith which he professes, or upon the institution which Christian piety has founded for the maintenance and furtherance of the faith among us ; but, on the contrary, to make his daily life a sacrifice of thanksgiving to God for the unspeakable blessings of reception into the baptismal covenant, and of an education based upon a recognition of the privileges and of the duties which reception into that covenant involves.

## SERMON XVIII.

PREACHED IN TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL ON JUNE  
24, 1860, BEING THE LAST SUNDAY IN THE  
ACADEMICAL YEAR.

*For S. John Baptist's Day.*

ISAIAH xl. 3.—“The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness,  
Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert  
a highway for our God.”

THE Church instructs us on this day to commemorate the great forerunner of our Lord's first coming; and as, both in the collect for the day, and also in the collect for the Third Sunday in Advent, the Baptist is presented to us as a model for our imitation, and more especially as an example to Christian ministers, the thoughts which the day suggests will fully harmonize with our own special circumstances at the close of the academical year, when a larger number than usual are about to take their leave of us for the purpose of entering upon the sacred duties of the ministry. Let us, then, consider the lessons which may be drawn from the character of that holy man of God,

whose memory we are on this day taught to cherish. He stands in a remarkable position between the law and the gospel, yet, surely, far more closely related to the latter than to the former. "All the prophets and the law," says our Lord, "prophesied until John"—their office was but prophetic; "but from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence." That kingdom had been announced as close at hand; men had been warned and invited to prepare for its coming, and by listening to that warning, by obeying that invitation, they did, by anticipation at least, "press into it." And, surely, we form not only an imperfect, but an erroneous conception of the character of the Baptist, if we consider that the contrast between his discipline and that of our Blessed Lord is merely to the prejudice of the former; as if S. John's austerity and severity of tone were but the dark background which should bring out into full relief the meekness and the gentleness of Christ. There was a contrast, indeed, between the forerunner and Him who was to come—between the herald and the Great King; there was a contrast, yet not an opposition. Wisdom, the wisdom of God, was justified in both her children; in the child who was called "the prophet of the Highest," and in the Child whose name is "called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

We cannot, indeed, hope to apprehend fully the

wondrous ways and works of God ; our joy and confidence are that they are far wiser and greater than we can know ; yet we may ever, if we will, discern at least some glimpses of His glory and of His goodness, something which may set our hearts at rest, and enable us to wait in quiet expectation till His mystery shall be finished. May we not, then, believe that the person, the habits, the character of S. John the Baptist were peculiarly suited to the nation to which he was sent ? Old faith was dying out among them ; overlaid, in the instance of the Pharisee, by a mass of senseless and immoral traditions ; all but extirpated, in the instance of the Sadducee, by hardened and profligate infidelity. If anything could successfully appeal to the conscience of either, it would surely be a reproduction before their eyes of ancient simplicity and piety. We might almost imagine that a Pharisee, hard pressed in argument, would say to an opponent, " If I am wrong, let an old prophet come to be my teacher ;" and that a Sadducee might say, " If I am to believe, it must be at the word of an Elijah."

And so, on the banks of Jordan, an Elijah stood : a man more fitted to hold converse with Abraham, the friend of God—or with his own great prototype—than with their degenerate descendants of his own time : a man bearing no mark whatever of the days in which he was born ; having no special sympathies with the existing order of things, whether social,

political, or religious; disengaged from all petty ties, from all inferior interests; a son of Abraham, a true antique Israelite; speaking as it were out of the past to the present, and having nought which bound him to that present but the one common hope of Israel; announcing, with startling simplicity, that the promise which God had made unto the fathers, He was now fulfilling unto their children.

Some strong reason there must have been why "all men counted John, that he was a prophet indeed;" some strong reason why they said, "John did no miracle, but all things that John spake of this man were true;" and I believe that we shall find this reason in the fact that he was instructed to present himself to his countrymen under such a form as carried their minds back irresistibly to the ancient glories of their history, and thus reminded them strongly that God was ever their King, ever ruling over them, even though Babylon or Rome might for a while interpose its gigantic shadow between His people and the glory of His presence.

Nor let us forget that our Blessed Lord, while He Himself deigned to present to us a perfect example, and not only that one aspect of holiness which His servant John presented (for this, let us remember, He did present, when once he fasted for forty days and forty nights, and when, not once, but often, He continued all night in prayer to God), still fully

recognized the type of moral and spiritual excellence which S. John the Baptist exemplified, as one which was to be realized in His followers. Did His answer to His questioners on this point imply that S. John's rule was wrong, or that His own disciples were as yet incapable of following that rule? New wine was to be put not in old skins, but in new, and the skins were not new as yet. The old garment would not bear the insertion of the stout new cloth, but this would find its place when all things were made new. Nor, again, could the children of the bride-chamber fast while the bridegroom was with them, but the days would come when the bridegroom should be taken from them, and then they should fast.

If we study the example of S. Paul, we may see in beautiful harmony the characteristics both of the forerunner and of our Lord: we may see, on the one side, the austerity of S. John sublimed into Christian endurance, the obligatory and ceremonial abstinence of the Nazarite transfigured into the voluntary and moral self-denial which the vow of charity prescribes; we may see, on the other side, the gracious condescension of our Blessed Lord imitated by His apostle, in becoming "all things to all men." And, if we turn to S. Paul's last instructions to his dearly beloved son Timothy, do we not hear an echo of the voice which cried on the banks of the Jordan, in those remarkable words, "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good



soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier"?

We may, then, without hesitation, both as Christians and as Christian ministers, seek instruction from the example of S. John the Baptist; nor can we do better, in seeking that instruction, than turn to the language of the collect for the day, and observe in what way we are there directed to ask of God that we may follow his example. And first, "by constantly speaking the truth;" that is, by steadfastly, and without hesitation, avowing and inculcating sacred verities. This we must do, if we would be useful ministers of the Church; perhaps I should rather say, if we would not be positively dangerous and injurious to others in the exercise of our sacred office. And, if we would constantly, firmly, steadfastly speak the truth, we must constantly believe it. We are not sent to preach our own opinions, to give utterance to our own fancies, to hazard our own rash conjectures, but to declare the truth of God. What would that voice have been, which cried in the wilderness, had it proceeded from one who was not strongly persuaded of the truth of his great message? How could the simple recluse have met the gaze of Pharisee and Sadducee, the cold contempt of worldly learning, and the hardened scorn of self-indulgence, had he not felt that he bore God's message to man, and had he not been empowered, by

the very depth and earnestness of this conviction, to make the most stubborn and the most indifferent feel it also ?

There is no man to be regarded with deeper pity than one who has adventured to assume the sacred office which obliges him "constantly to speak the truth," while he has not as yet heartily embraced the truth which he is bound to speak. Brethren, how can we speak that which we do not cordially believe ? how can we use words which we accept not in their plain meaning ? how can we dare to inculcate, as a holy faith, that which we ourselves regard only as a vague and visionary philosophy ?

There is great danger in this regard in our days, and I am bound not to disguise it. We have high examples, which may appear to some to palliate, if not to justify, this grievous offence ; we have instances of men who seem to think that creeds and confessions are made only for ignorant and vulgar minds—are merely a gross exoteric husk, which may be utterly contemned by those who have grasped, as they conceive, the inward truth, which this rude and shapeless covering, in their apprehension, at once protects and obscures.

One,\* who well knows the state of things at home, speaks, in a recent publication, of "some of our best and noblest minds having made shipwreck concerning

\* Dr. Vaughan, in his "Memorials of Harrow Sundays."

the faith," and he adds, that even when this fatal consequence has not been fully realized, there are other cases in which the result has been "either a most timid and uncertain grasp of all revelation, or else the selection of a few scattered portions of it and the rejection (secret or avowed) of all the rest." "That which is saved out of the wreck," he adds, "is too often little more than a gospel without its gospel, a creed which reason could have taught without revelation, and which is accepted just because it is reason, and not revelation, which warrants it and vouches for it." These are, indeed, pregnant words, and teach us very forcibly what it is to come short of "constantly speaking the truth."

As members and ministers of the Church of England, we have a plain guide to follow in our Creeds, our Liturgy, and our Articles. I believe that the day will never come when a Christian man will see good cause to be ashamed of the confession which we make in those formularies ; at all events, no man who is not prepared frankly and cordially to accept them, as the rule and measure of his own teaching, can have any right to intrude himself into the ministry of our branch of the Church. He cannot, in so doing, look for the blessing of Almighty God, for the approval of honest minds, or for the repose of a quiet conscience.

But we are next directed to pray that we may follow the example of S. John the Baptist, "by boldly

rebuking vice." And here recent events remind us, in a very startling manner, how soon we may be called upon to follow his example to the very letter. His words, "It is not lawful for thee to have her," have a strange application to the circumstances of the present time, when the lawfulness and expediency of that very connection, which this servant of God denounced in the case of a degenerate Jew, is publicly and unblushingly advocated by men who claim for themselves the name of Christians. S. John said, "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife." Christian legislators are found to say, "It is lawful for thee to have thy sister's husband." Thus are men seeking to infringe the only authoritative marriage law which the world has ever received—to break through the one sacred defence which the wisdom and benevolence of the Almighty have set around the peace and purity of the domestic circle, elevating thereby unspeakably the moral sense in man, and making his earthly existence incomparably more precious to him than it could otherwise have been, by restraining, by a positive enactment, his absolute freedom in respect of marriage. Let this one great law of God be broken through, and we have no guard whatever against the flood of iniquity; marriage, accounted no longer a holy and honourable thing, will gradually become a thing profane and contemptible, till all distinction between vice and virtue, in this momentous regard, will be utterly obliterated.

We cannot look upon these things without entertaining the apprehension that the duty of the ministers of Christ, in the assertion of moral obligations, may in future become far more arduous than it has hitherto been, at least within this realm; that they may have occasion to urge the law of God upon the consciences of men, unsupported by the authority of human law or of public opinion, and to point to the great tribunal where sin will surely be visited, though neither disgrace nor punishment await its commission here.

We must imitate, then, the boldness of S. John; and let us remember that, if we would be successfully bold against this or any other form of evil, we must possess the boldness of innocence—a boldness which none can feel but he who knows that it is not a thing impossible to serve God—not a thing impossible to lead a godly, righteous, and sober life; the boldness of him who knows that the love of God is the keeping of His commandments, and that His commandments are not grievous.

But, again, we are directed to pray that, after the example of S. John, we may patiently suffer for the truth's sake. The discharge of the duties already mentioned implies at least the possibility of suffering. Men do not always love the truth, so that it will not always be an acceptable office to speak it constantly; men often excuse vice, or desire, at all events, in order to gratify themselves, to relax the restraints imposed

by religion and morality, and therefore they who boldly rebuke vice will hardly escape censure and harsh treatment.

It is not, therefore, without some dark forebodings, that we see a great assault preparing, both against the Christian truth which we are bound to speak, and against the Christian morality which we are bound to uphold; and we must, if we would do our duty, be prepared to suffer for the truth's sake. And what are we to suffer? It may be violence from those who openly reject God, both as the revealer of truth, and as the dispenser of moral laws; or it may be the more dangerous trial of being subjected to the derision of those who affect to understand, far better than ourselves, both Christian doctrine and Christian practice. And so we may have to suffer as bigots, as men hopelessly enthralled to obsolete dogmas, to creeds outworn; as men who derive their rules of social order from the barbarous legislation of an ancient nomad race—a race utterly ignorant of the refinements of modern society, and of the requirements of an advanced civilization. I think that we must expect the sneer rather than the sword, the trial of cruel mockings rather than of bonds and imprisonment.

And, if it be so, let us patiently suffer for the truth's sake. For, beyond all doubt, there is a holy truth for which to suffer, a truth of which Christ Himself is the centre, laying His sacred hand upon

both Testaments—upon their doctrine and their discipline—telling us what has been fulfilled for evermore in Him, and what is evermore to be fulfilled in us; Himself the centre of patriarchs and prophets, of evangelists and apostles, making every word of theirs His own, their teaching the truth of God; and still assuring us, as the deceits of the world would bewilder or allure us, that “the world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

In conclusion, suffer me to remind you that as it is our duty thus to speak the truth, and thus to bear witness against moral evil, in our capacity as ministers of the Christian Church, so also does this duty devolve upon us in a special manner as members of this college. I trust that those who have gone forth, or are now going forth, from these walls to serve the Church in this province, feel that at least something has been done, during their period of study here, to prepare them to discharge that service. They have, at all events, enjoyed the opportunity of becoming conversant with sacred truth; they have learned how to prove, from Holy Scripture, the doctrines which our Church affirms; they have seen something, at least, of the marvellous coherence of the articles of our faith one with another; they have felt, again and again, how complicated is the testimony which God has given to the great verities which are to be the subject

of their teaching. Let them think, then, of the good providence of God, in appointing for them this place of preparation for their arduous duty, and let them ever pray Him to give them grace to turn to good account the advantages which they have here enjoyed.

Nor let any who are receiving instruction within this college imagine that their position here does not entail upon them a peculiar responsibility, and lay them under special obligations. The youngest amongst us may remember the circumstances under which this college was founded, and is aware of the end which its founders had in view. More especially do we know the object which the bishop of this diocese proposed to himself, when, after a long series of discouragements and disappointments, he saw the labour of many years, so far as the direct influence of the Church and the inculcation of religious truth were concerned, utterly thrown away; and was compelled to begin anew, from the foundation, with greatly diminished resources, the work of his earlier days.

At the close of our ninth year we have much to be thankful for, in the success of our bishop's pious endeavours; but we must also feel that there is room for regret that the success has not been more complete, and that, at all events, steady exertion is required to ensure the permanent prosperity of our society.

Let us, then, remember that this exertion must be



made by all, that every one must put his hand to the work. Were our numbers tenfold greater than they are, we might still urge this argument; but while they are so small, it must apply with tenfold force. Any single instance of neglect of duty is an appreciable loss to us; if there be any one among us whose misconduct throws suspicion on our discipline, or whose indolence suggests disparaging remarks upon our course of study, such misconduct or such indolence is no small damage to the college.

On the other hand, what can be a more cheering incitement to good conduct, to regularity, and to diligence, than the conviction which every one among you may justly entertain, that, by the conscientious discharge of his Christian duty in the place in which God has set him, he is doing very much to build up the general reputation of the society to which he belongs, and to secure results which lie very near the heart of the venerable prelate, who laboured so assiduously for its establishment, and who has ever discovered so constant and solicitous an interest in its welfare?

Give to this college, then one and all, the help of your earnest efforts and of your constant prayers, both while you are studying here and when you shall have left us; and if, unhappily, you have proof that there are those who have evil will at this nursery of the Church, or who speak calumniously of it, be it your

care to disappoint, by your own intellectual and moral excellence, the expectations of its adversaries ; and to stop the mouth of calumny, by proving, in your own persons, that within these walls the young are taught to believe the holy doctrines, and to practise the pure morality, of the gospel of Christ.

## SERMON XIX.

PREACHED IN TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL ON JUNE  
25, 1865, BEING THE LAST SUNDAY IN THE  
ACADEMICAL YEAR.

TITUS ii. 6.—“Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded.”

THERE are not a few instances in which the beauty and dignity of the language of Holy Scripture are inevitably marred in a translation, because no terms can be found capable of conveying distinctly and fully the meaning of the original; and this would seem to be the case with the verse before us, the breadth and fulness of the apostle's instruction being but partially represented in our version.

It is, however, a matter of no small moment that we should clearly understand what that instruction is, in which, as a modern writer has said, “A young man's duty is simply but comprehensively enunciated;” and, in order that we may arrive at this understanding, we must compare other passages in which the word itself, which we translate “to be sober-minded,” or its cognates occur.

In the verse which immediately precedes the text the cognate adjective is used, being translated by the word "discreet," and, as it is immediately followed by the word "chaste," we learn that it must at all events include more than the latter term expresses. Moral purity is but one result, one manifestation, of the "discretion" which the apostle enjoins, that "discretion" discovering itself in many other noble and beautiful details of character and conduct; yet purity is, undoubtedly, one most important result of that "safe and sound mindedness," which is expressed by the word *σωφρονεῖν*.

Let us, then, begin from this, which may be regarded as its narrowest meaning, and allow that the "sobriety," the "soundness of mind," of which the apostle speaks, is an antidote to the undue love of pleasure. The age in which the apostle lived, the character of the people for whose sake and in respect of whom he was giving these instructions, may well have suggested to his thoughts *this* meaning of the term which he employs; and, moreover, universal experience proves how much occasion the young have, in this regard, to cherish sobriety of mind.

The infatuation which an undue love of pleasure induces is no slight danger to the young, whether it be regarded as betraying them into indulgences which are positively sinful, or as, in instances far more numerous, enervating and enfeebling the mind, and

diverting from the pursuit of intellectual improvement or of moral excellence.

We will not, however, dwell on this most obvious lesson, but proceed to consider in what other ways the sobriety which the apostle enjoins will discover itself.

It not only restrains the undue love of pleasure, but it also corrects every other disorder whether of the affections or of the judgment. The man who is "sober," in the apostle's sense, is right-minded, and that in respect both of his opinions and of his feelings: he thinks aright, and his emotions are well regulated and awakened by fitting objects.

Let us take a few instances from the apostle's writings which may elucidate his usage of the word. To the Romans he says (xii. 3), "I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly." The original is far more pointed and emphatic than any translation can be; and it may be especially noticed that the latter clause may be literally rendered, "but to think to the end of thinking soberly." Here, then, we learn that sobriety is, in the apostle's view, opposed to self-conceit—to an undue persuasion of our own deserts, attainments, or capacities. This self-complacency may arise from different causes; from an ignorance of what others have done or can do—an ignorance often voluntary, or

from an ignorant confidence in powers of our own which have been but very partially tested; under this aspect it is a result of *intellectual* infirmity. Again, its main source may be, and not unfrequently is, a strong disinclination to accord their due honour and love to our brethren in the Body of Christ; in which case it discovers a *moral* obliquity and infirmity. It is thus inconsistent alike with true wisdom and with true charity; he is the wise and loving man who, "in lowliness of mind," has learned to "esteem others better than himself"—to recognize frankly and cheerfully those particulars of conduct in which others present to him an example which he may safely and gladly follow, and who thus thinks of himself in comparison with them "to the end of thinking soberly."

But, again, there is another kind of self-discipline which this marvellously pregnant word implies. The apostle says to Timothy (2 Tim. i. 7), "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." *Σωφρονισμοῦ* is the word here employed, a word which may be taken either intransitively, in the sense of "self-control," implying the *result* of the process which the cognate verb expresses—the *character* of the spirit given by God; or transitively, in the sense of "schooling to soberness," thus expressing the *process* itself from which self-control results, the *discipline* under which the spirit given by

God is formed and perfected. Immediately before our text the verb *σωφρονίζωσιν* is employed, and is translated "that they may teach," that is, "may school or discipline to self-restraint." Whether the word *σωφρο-  
νισμὸς* marks the process from which the spirit, of which the apostle speaks, results, or the character of that spirit itself, is of little moment in respect of our present inquiry; we may, in either case, readily discern how important an element is here designated in the character of every Christian man, and especially of every Christian minister. Power and love are wondrous and indispensable motive energies; the *σωφρονισμὸς* is that controlling, conservative principle which directs them, restraining the excessive or irregular action of the one, sustaining the weakness and shielding the delicacy of the other. How dangerous, how destructive, may be the operation of power without this moderating principle! How may not the blessed labours of love be misdirected, and her treasures worse than wasted, without its salutary control! And, again, what an effectual guard does it not interpose between these divine gifts and the many adversaries and obstacles which they must necessarily encounter! It is the patient, humble, self-denying spirit of the truly sound-minded man which bears up against reverses, endures disappointments, outlives unjust reproaches, and thus dearly purchases for the sacred gifts with which it is associated due room and opportunity for

the exercise of their energies, for the ingathering of the fruits of their labours.

But we must take yet another view, from the apostle's language, of the sense which he attaches to the word which he here employs. Standing before the Roman Procurator of Judæa, he said, in reply to his taunting interruption, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad," "I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the words of truth and soberness." There may be, there often is, a madness—a want of sobriety—in respect of religious belief and practice. Men oftentimes, instead of submitting their reason, as a wondrous and most precious gift of God, to the guidance of the Spirit of Him who gave it, dream that they are most surely following the guidance of God's Spirit by abandoning their reason. Unconsciously adopting heretical opinions, most dishonourable to the Maker of heaven and earth, they distrust and despise all natural gifts, as if it were the office of the Blessed Spirit to supersede rather than to sanctify them, to annihilate rather than to restore the work of the Creator. But S. Paul urges that he spoke not only the words of *truth*, but the words of *soberness*. Words which might commend themselves to man's heart, not merely by virtue of a supernatural influence exerted upon him, but also through the medium of his natural understanding. He would teach us that, while the will is to be subdued and the affections rectified, these



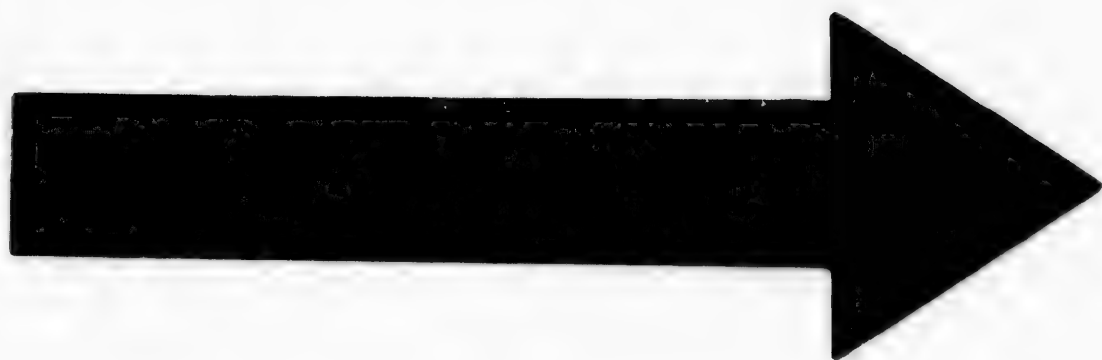
lower powers are to be placed under the government of the reason, while the reason itself is to acknowledge and approve the teaching of the Spirit of God. How much has not religion suffered at the hands of those who have viewed with suspicion or with contempt the *σωφροσύνη* of the apostle—who have exposed holy names and sacred verities to the scorn of the unbeliever and the worldling, because they have given the rein to foolish imaginations or disordered affections, and have obscured the majestic sobriety—the awful reasonableness—of Christian truth, under the revolting or grotesque mask of fanaticism or licentious speculation! We must remember, too, that this want of soberness is discovered in matters not only of belief but of practice, and that the dignity of heavenly truth may be outraged not only by crude theories but also by extravagance and caprice in respect of ritual observance: by both these modes may men dishonour that religion which in their hearts they love, and hinder the advancement of a sacred cause for which they would be content to die.

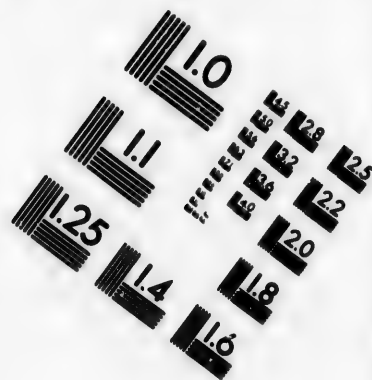
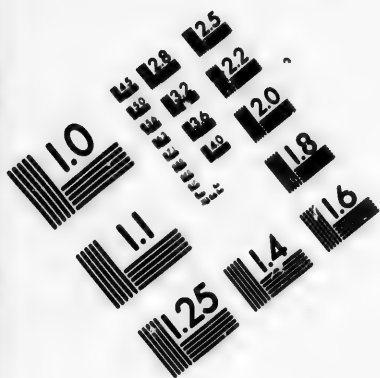
But, once more, the whole context shows that the apostle regards “sobriety” as the opposite of a worldly spirit; the schooling, or disciplining, which he expresses by the term *σωφρονίζωσι* extends to every particular of conduct; they who are the objects of this *σωφρονισμὸς* are to be taught to shun every error whereby “the Word of God might be blasphemed.” Every

disorder of the affections or of the judgment, though it may not lead to the pursuit of what is called pleasure, is opposed to true "sobriety." All unruly passions, all unworthy compliances, all inordinate devotion to the interests or objects of this life, are alien from the character which the apostle directs us to assume.

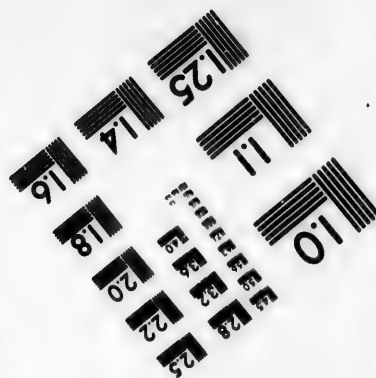
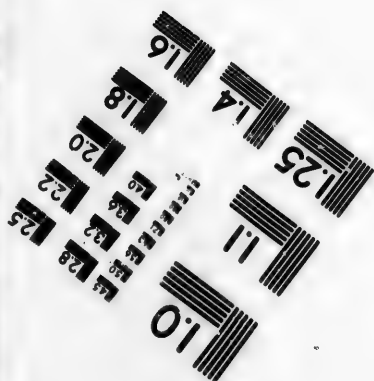
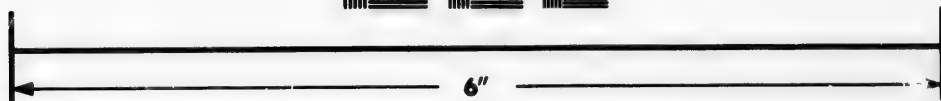
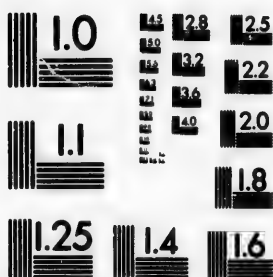
And how is this sobriety to be attained? There is but One who can teach us how to attain it, who can teach us to desire and prize the gift; and He will teach us this, in answer to prayer, by the power of His Holy Spirit. And by what means does Almighty God "sober" man? By revealing to him his real position in God's universe—his future destiny—his present responsibility, and by enabling him to walk by faith in these awful verities. A man may hear again and again the truths of God's Holy Word—the wonders of the life to come; he may speak of them with persuasive force; he may convince and move others; and yet they will remain unrealities to himself, except by prayer and watchfulness he invite and obtain the co-operation of the Blessed Spirit, and learn by His help so to live for the world to come, as that its grand and awful outlines may grow from day to day more distinct before the eyes of his understanding.

And why should the *young* be exhorted to cherish this sobriety? Not the young *only*, but the young with others, does the apostle thus exhort. Yet he sums up *all* his exhortation to young men in this one





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word. For it is especially necessary that *they* should cherish this spirit. Every danger which has been mentioned is especially a danger to *them*; every gift which God has bestowed on them, every accident of their position, every object which is presented or proposed to them, involves, more or less, the danger of swerving from the sacred rule of sobriety.

Life is with them beginning, and in prospect it seems long indeed; full of enjoyment, full of hope, full of noble aims and purposes; there is little, it would seem, which may not be realized during the course which lies before them. There is but One Teacher who can effectually say to their hearts, "Be sober." God can teach them that their bodies and their spirits are His, and that they must glorify Him therewith. He can fix their gaze upon the life to come, till the longest life on earth shall appear but a very little while. He can teach them the worse than emptiness of sensual gratification, of worldly pleasure; the vanity of every object which, apart from His love and fear, they can possibly attain or even propose to themselves; and He can and will do all this without abating their happiness, without paralyzing their energies, without chilling, in any wise, that generous warmth of hope, that honourable desire to live to some good purpose, to some worthy end, which give to youth its chief grace, and which we cannot discourage or disparage without condemning the workmanship of God. Our Father in

heaven does not, by the teaching of His good Spirit, eradicate this hope, this desire ; much rather does He elevate and confirm them, by presenting to them their only adequate object, and by assuring us that if we will seek His gracious help, we shall not fail to attain it. The world may tell us of rewards which it has to bestow, of prizes which are ready for the grasp of genius, of courage, of persevering exertion ; but we cannot read the history of the past, we cannot look on life around us, without learning how fearful is the risk of disappointment, how often, too, the prize, when grasped, is worthless to him who has secured it.

But there is *no* disappointment for those who consent to serve God. He crowns, in every path of life, His faithful servants, whether the world crown them or no ; and the crown which He bestows shall, unlike the perishable honours of the earth, never fade away. If, however, we would serve God, we must pray Him to make us, and to keep us, of a sound mind ; to teach us the very hard lesson of believing and realizing what we really are, and of living from day to day in that belief ; using the world, not using it up ; enjoying life, yet not idolizing enjoyment ; seeking diligently some worthy end, yet not as self-pleasers, but in loving and reverent subjection to Himself ; doing diligently our work in this world, yet with a constant reference to the world to come ; remembering the end of all things, and learning to think of that

end not with terror, but with humble and trustful expectation.

How happy are they who, by God's grace, early attain to this sobriety ; who learn in youth to number their days, and realize how short a time the longest life on earth must be ; who learn to count their years by decades, and perceive how very soon they must glide away ; and thus begin truly to *live* when life is beginning, not dreaming on till they awake to discover that for all enduring purposes—for all those great ends for which God gave them life—life has been thrown away.

They are on a voyage, and they are steadily keeping their course towards their appointed haven ; not idly hovering around pleasant shores, or changing their direction in order that they may drive before every shifting wind, till they find that "sailing is now dangerous," and that the hope of reaching the haven in security and peace is sadly darkened. They are on a journey, and the morning finds them addressing themselves to their task ; they are not lavishing their strength and buoyancy of spirits in thoughtless deviations from their prescribed road ; they are not surrendering themselves to aimless indolence ; and so they will not, in the noontide heat, begin to tread, wearied and disheartened, the path which should have been trodden in the freshness of morning ; or, sadder yet, when the shades of evening are falling, commence,



with shame and sorrow, a journey which the coming darkness must make gloomy and difficult indeed, if it do not utterly preclude the possibility of accomplishing it.

But it may be asked, "Is this really the truth for us all? Does a sober mind oblige us thus to conclude? Is all around us so unsubstantial, so unreal? Is man's home, man's life, man's true being, elsewhere than on earth?" Not only God's Word, but God's providence, gives an answer to this inquiry. We put from us very strangely, and more especially do the young put from them, the thought of death. Yet God brings it home to us at times in a form which we cannot refuse to recognize. He has taught us, as a society, during the course of the past year, the absolute necessity of thinking soberly of another life, and of habitual preparation for it. One who came hither when the present academical year began, is not with us now; he left us for a short recess, and not long after that had elapsed God had taken him to Himself. We have seen another compelled, by grievous sickness, to break off a course of study which had nearly reached its close, and to return to the care of his own family in a distant home.

We cannot look without deep regret, without lively sympathy, on visitations such as these; it is very saddening to see youthful hopes thus frustrated, youthful exertions thus made of no effect.

Let us, however, remember that, if these hopes were cherished, these exertions made, in a Christian spirit; if they were subordinated to the one great hope of the gospel—to the one great effort to do the will of God—then they are *not* simply disappointed. God has far better things in store for those who love and serve Him, than anything which can be sought or desired here. God's dispensations, however painful they may be, do but call those who faithfully and patiently endure them, to something far higher than any earthly hopes—far brighter than any expectations for this life—which His wisdom sees fit to overcloud.

And let us lay to heart a lesson, which may greatly tend to abate the perplexity in which these visitations involve us—the lesson which the apostle himself elsewhere teaches us, that “no man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.” We live for others—this we can probably more readily apprehend; but we also die for others. There are grave lessons to be taught by early and by sudden death; every circumstance which adds to the painfulness of the stroke, may, in God's good providence, add also to the deep and wholesome instruction which it conveys. And thus we may learn to look upon these mournful events, not as the deplorable results of some blind chance, of some malignant destiny; but, much rather, as the beneficent, though awful, discipline of an Almighty and Omniscient God—a discipline whereby He

challenges, in a peculiar manner, the reverent attention of His creatures; calling upon us to "awake to righteousness, and sin not," to make a sober estimate of a life which we are thus taught to know to be most brief, most uncertain; warning us to cherish every desire and purpose which our hope for the departed would commend to us, to abhor every form of evil which his remembrance and our hope for him would rebuke; that so his early death may, through God's grace, contribute to the saving of our own true life, and that it may be known hereafter that the stroke by which he was taken away did not fall in vain.

## SERMON XX.

PREACHED AT S. STEPHEN'S, TORONTO, AT AN ORDINATION HELD BY THE BISHOP OF TORONTO, OCTOBER 9, 1870.

S. JOHN XX. 21-23.—“Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you : as My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost : whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them ; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.”

It will be obvious to every one who examines our service for the ordering of priests, that our Church regards the words of the text as containing the charter of the Christian ministry—the authority under which “the ministers of Christ, the stewards of the mysteries of God,” are to act until the end of the world. This fact will not be disputed by those who deny the Church's claim thus to regard the words of our Blessed Lord—who would restrict the application of the words to those whom He immediately addressed, and would leave to Christians, in these later times, no rule, no guidance, no support, no consolation, from the

wondrous commission which the risen Lord gave to the apostles whom He had chosen, on His first meeting with them after His passion. Time will not allow me to do more than to touch very briefly on the unhappy theory which would leave us, as Christian men, no teachers save those who bear witness to themselves that they are God's messengers, or those who have been constituted to minister in holy things by no higher authority than human will. It must suffice to say, that only they who have an hypothesis to serve, can possibly be content with the interpretation which this hypothesis compels them to put on many statements of Holy Writ, and on the words of our Lord Himself.

The Evangelist S. Matthew, who gives no account of that first meeting at which the words of the text were uttered, does, however, report to us other words, which plainly indicate that the powers conferred on the apostles, and the promises vouchsafed to them, were, with the exception of the miraculous or extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, extended, far beyond their own personal service, to others, who, in future days, should inherit the ordinary duties and prerogatives of their office as ambassadors of Christ. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Are we wrong in supposing that this is a promise made to a ministry which was to continue to the end? Can they be right who, leaving the plain meaning of the

words, would attempt to limit their application to the eleven, by understanding the promise to be made, not in respect of their *persons*, but of their *writings*; and this, when six at least of those eleven have left no writings at all? We must believe, if we would read Holy Scripture aright, that there is a work continually going on, in and on behalf of the Christian Church, no less divine than that of which the text speaks. We are not honouring, but dishonouring, our great Master, if we permit ourselves to believe that He is less truly with us now than He was with the eleven on the resurrection day, or that He has less fully provided, than He did in the instance of His first messengers and apostles, for the due authorization of those who are now sent forth, in His name, to administer His sacraments and to teach His Word.

It is not without a cause that we recite, in our Ordination Service, the ancient hymn "*Veni, Creator Spiritus*." This is no mere form, no mere expression of religious sentiment; it is a solemn act of faith. For, without the presence of that Blessed and Holy Spirit whom we thus adventure to invoke, the great work to which men are ordained must remain undone. No man can make another a minister of Christ. Ordination is a divine act, requiring a Divine Agent. S. Paul did not say to the elders of Ephesus, when he had convoked them at Miletus, "Take heed to all the flock, over the which *I* have made you overseers," but

"over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers;" and he said this, not because they had intruded themselves into the ministry on the plea that God had sent them, nor because they had been called by the people to assume the eldership over them; but because he himself had, in that Church, as in every other which he founded, ordained elders, and because he did not doubt, but earnestly believed, that He who had called him to the apostleship was ever with him in his apostolic work, that the Spirit of Christ was ever ready to set His divine seal to the ministerial acts of the servant of Christ, and, by the laying on of his hands, to give the Holy Ghost.

The great writers of our own Church teach us to regard ordination in accordance with the principles here laid down. Bishop Bilson, in his work on "The Perpetual Government of Christ's Church" (p. 160), says, "To create ministers by imposing hands, is to give them not only power and leave to preach the Word and dispense the sacraments, but also the grace of the Holy Spirit, to make them able to execute both parts of their function." In elucidation of these words, it must be observed that the grace of the Holy Spirit no man can, of himself, give; he may, however, according to the laws of Christ's kingdom, become instrumentally the cause of its being bestowed; and the inspired history of the first days of that kingdom, assures us that it has pleased our Lord to

convey the heavenly gift through the human ministration of the chief officers of His Church.

Again, Hooker ("Eecl. Pol.," bk. v. ch. 77, § 8) says, "When we take ordination, we receive the presence of the Holy Ghost. . . . Whether we preach, pray, baptize, communicate, condemn, give absolution, or whatsoever, as disposers of God's mysteries, our words, judgments, acts, and deeds are not ours, but the Holy Ghost's." Again, Bishop Pearson ("Exp. of the Creed," Article 8) says, "It is the office of the Holy Ghost to sanctify and set apart persons for the duty of the ministry, ordaining them to intercede between God and His people, to send up prayers to God for them, to bless them in the name of God, to teach the doctrine of the gospel, to administer the sacraments instituted by Christ, to perform all things necessary 'for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.'"

It can scarcely be doubted that many objections to the language of our Ordination Service will wholly disappear, when we learn thus to refer the act of ordination to a Divine Agent, and when we remember that our Church has adopted the language of her ordinal under the solemn persuasion that it is her exalted Redeemer who, by His Spirit, gives evermore pastors and teachers to His flock. Were the act of ordination a work merely human, nothing could exceed the arrogant presumption of one who should



venture, as an independent human agent, to appropriate to himself the powers claimed, and to give utterance to the language employed in our ordinal.

But it is something very different indeed for the commissioned servant of Christ, doing his great Master's bidding, faithfully to assert the commission which he has received, and explicitly to avow his trust in that divine co-operation, which, as he is assured, attends his human ministration.

The use of the language of Holy Scripture—the adoption of our Blessed Lord's own solemn words—will in this view, so far from being an offence, serve to convey a most instructive lesson; it will raise the thoughts of the recipient of the sacred ordinance, and of those who witness its administration, from the seen to the unseen, from the earthen vessel to the heavenly treasure, from the feebleness of man to the gracious power of God.

There may, however, be other doubts and difficulties arising from the language of our service which will not be wholly excluded by the simple recognition of a divine presence and agency in the work of ordination; and, for the purpose of dealing with these doubts and difficulties, it may be desirable to review in their order the several clauses of the text.

And, first of all, our Blessed Lord is recorded to have said, "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." It has been well observed, by ancient inter-

preters of Holy Scripture, that we may not too rigidly press the comparison between Christ's own mission by the Father and the mission of the apostles by Himself; otherwise, as these writers have said, there would be no distinction of dignity or power between the apostles and Christ. The very fact that our Blessed Lord claims absolute authority to send, marks the vast interval between the Great Messenger of the Covenant and all inferior messengers; and, again, there is much to be learned from the circumstance that our Lord does not say, "as My Father sent," but "as My Father *hath* sent Me." His own great mission was not at an end when He commissioned others; He still continued to be the Apostle as well as the High Priest of our confession. Though He was about to withdraw His bodily presence, He had promised not to leave His disciples comfortless or orphaned; He had promised to come to them again. And it is His continuous mission, in the power and spiritual presence of the "other Comforter," abiding with the Church for ever, and perpetuating the blessed work of the earthly ministry of the Son as the great Prophet and Teacher of the Church—it is this continuous mission of Him whom the Father *hath* sent, which gathers up within itself and subordinates to itself every other mission, and gives to the faithful labours of all the appointed servants of Christ—apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers—that divine

effect, that spiritual energy, without which they would be absolutely fruitless.

So there is, undoubtedly, a sense in which Christ did *not* send His apostles even as the Father hath sent Him; not with the like plenitude of power which pertains to Him who is God as well as man—not with the same high prerogative which He holds, in respect of His human nature, as the Head of the body, the Church, from whom every member of that Church derives its spiritual life and derives its capacity of action. But still, with this infinite disparity, there *is* a likeness between the mission of the Lord and the mission of His servants—a likeness which He graciously deigns not only to recognize but to affirm; and wherein does this likeness consist, except in carrying out, so far as man can do it, the blessed work which the Redeemer began in His own personal ministry upon earth, and is still fulfilling both on earth and in heaven?

What is it but to teach, exhort, and comfort in His name, to administer His holy sacraments, to bless in His name, to declare His sentence of pardon, to separate from the communion of His Church those who have already separated themselves from Him by deadly sin; to bring the unseen Teacher, the unseen King, the unseen Priest, evermore before the eyes of men, and to remind them, when sad occasion arises, by the exercise of wholesome discipline, of Him who shall come to be their Judge?

But we further read, "And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." We know that "the promise of the Father," the gift of the Holy Ghost, was bestowed on the day of Pentecost, after our Lord's ascension; and we may wonder that our Lord should apparently be said to have now communicated that for which He afterwards instructed His apostles to wait, in prayer and silent expectation. It would be strange, indeed, if this were so. But we have been taught to distinguish between the two gifts: to recognize in the one an authoritative commission to undertake the apostolic office, in the other the communication of miraculous endowments and, probably, of moral and spiritual gifts, which might ensure its effectual discharge. The sacred words leave us no room to doubt that a wondrous gift was at this moment communicated, and that that gift was authority to exercise the several offices of the Christian ministry. After what has been already said of the necessity of divine power for effecting the act of ordination, it will not be requisite to dwell long on these words, pregnant as the clause nevertheless is with solemn and most impressive teaching. Our Blessed Lord "breathed" on the apostles; but He who breathed was God as well as man, and with that human breath went forth a divine and spiritual energy. Gifts of the Holy Ghost were imparted and

received when Christ thus breathed on the disciples. And now Christ's servant ventures to use the Lord's own words—to say, as He did, "Receive the Holy Ghost." And why? Because he is assured that his Lord has commissioned him to take his part in a sacred work—which yet can never be his alone, but ever presupposes a divine power, a Divine Agent, working together with that human weakness, whose only strength is faith. Man cannot constitute his fellow-man a minister of Christ; this must be done by the power of the Holy Ghost. And it is because the servant of Christ knows well the laws of his Lord's kingdom—knows the practice of the apostles themselves, and their instructions to their successors in their office—that he recognizes, in following that practice, in obeying those instructions, the unseen power which works with him in the discharge of his holy functions; and, being well assured that no ordination can be valid except by virtue of the communication of the grace of the Spirit of God, he adopts, for the instruction of the Church, and for the edification of the candidate for the priesthood, the very words which Christ Himself uttered in the beginning of the gospel, when He gave their commission to His apostles.

But, observe again, he does not say, "Receive from me," as if *he* had the power absolutely to bestow the gift of God. The words may almost be regarded as

a prayer; or, if they rise above this, what do they imply, but that, all care and diligence having been previously used in the choice of those who are to be admitted to the priesthood, the faithful and prudent servant doubts not his Heavenly Master's gracious concurrence in his official act, and openly confesses that the gift bestowed is one which not earth, but heaven, has power to communicate?

Our Lord, we read, then added the mysterious words, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." These words, again, are adopted in our Ordination Service, in like manner with the solemn words which our Lord had previously uttered. If we can, then, satisfy ourselves of the meaning of the words as they were spoken in the first instance by our Lord, of the intent with which He uttered them, we shall best understand their meaning as the Church uses them still, and shall satisfy ourselves most fully, not only of the lawfulness, but of the absolute fitness and propriety of her thus repeating, to the end of time, the words which were spoken in the beginning, when that ministry was first instituted which it is her duty to perpetuate. Men are stumbled at the dark sayings of Holy Scripture, and we often find that, being thus stumbled, they resolve to think and speak and act as if no such words as those which perplex or offend them were to be found on the pages

of Holy Writ. But, brethren, we must not consent thus to deal with any words of Him who is the Truth. However obscure or unwelcome His words may appear to our ignorance or to our pride, let us consent diligently and humbly to inquire what their meaning is, and let us pray Him who spake them to give us increase of grace, to hear meekly His Word, and to receive it with pure affection.

What, then, do these words mean? They *must* have a meaning of solemn import, of great practical importance. Some would restrict their application to those to whom they were immediately addressed. But against this interpretation there lies an objection, which, if we hold the belief of a continued ministry of divine appointment in the Church, we must regard as fatal; for this restriction, if pressed to its legitimate consequences, involves another, namely, the restriction of a divine commission, as ministers of Christ, to those to whom our Lord then spoke, with the sole exception of such other persons as subsequently received an extraordinary and miraculous call to the ministry. And, again, what cause can be assigned why this ministry of absolution should have been continued in the Church during the apostles' lives and during their lives only? Were they specially, not to say exclusively, qualified to exercise it? At times, indeed, they could read men's hearts, as S. Peter read those of Ananias and Sapphira, or deliver unto Satan

by the infliction of bodily judgments, as S. Paul smote Elymas with blindness. But ordinarily, as their Epistles amply testify, they were liable to be deceived in their converts, even as other good men might be. No unerring estimate of human character enabled them, more than others, to exercise their power of remitting and retaining sins absolutely and infallibly. And even if this had been the case, can we conceive of anything more disheartening to a Christian man, or to the Christian body as a whole, than the conviction that this divinely imparted power was at length dying out—that with the last of the apostles it would utterly disappear? How very hard would it have been to understand why such a gift should have been confided only for a time unto men; why such a seal should have been set, only for a brief season, on the external ministrations of Christ's Church! But, on the other hand, how strongly does the existence of such a gift permanently in the Church commend itself both to our judgment and to our affections!

There is One, indeed, who is “exalted at the right hand of God, a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins.” In Him alone resides the ultimate and absolute power. None can thus “forgive sins but God only;” and Christ thus, because He is God as well as man. But did He not Himself, in the days of His flesh, suggest to us a subordinate sense in which forgiveness or



remission might be conveyed? Did He not say to the sick of the palsy, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee"? And when they that stood by said, "This man blasphemeth: who can forgive sins but God only?" we do not read that our Lord rebuked them by asserting His divinity, but that He said, "That ye may know that the *Son of man* hath power upon earth to forgive sins." He claims as *man* power upon earth to do, in some sense, that which God in an absolute sense can alone do in heaven. Nor will it suffice to reply that our Lord, being God, and because He was God, claimed this power. He claimed it while He veiled His Godhead. He claimed it before those who knew not that He was God. He claimed it, we may venture to say, irrespectively of His Deity; and we read immediately afterwards that "the multitudes marvelled and glorified God, who had given such power unto men. To perform a miracle, to utter a prophecy, is ultimately a divine act; but God may enable a human being to do the one or the other in His name. To forgive sins is ultimately a divine act; but God may empower a human being to remit sins in His name.

And how, it may be asked, do the ministers of Christ exercise this power? I will mention some particulars, in which it has been maintained by approved writers of our own communion that this power is exercised.

Firstly, in the administration of the sacrament of Holy Baptism. We are taught to confess our belief in "one baptism for the remission of sins." If this be the gracious result of baptism, does not the minister of Christ remit sins in baptism? He, indeed, who said, "Go, teach [make disciples of] all nations, baptizing them," is the supreme Author of the remission; but His servant on earth, who does His bidding, is ministerially and subordinately the agent of the remission.

Secondly, by the administration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. "This is My blood, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins." Few will doubt that forgiveness of sins is a benefit resulting from a faithful participation of the supper of the Lord. We receive that benefit from the grace of the Redeemer, but do we not also receive it through the ministry of His servant upon earth?

Thirdly, by the offering of prayer, which passes insensibly into benediction. Considered as prayer, it is the word of the minister, going up on our behalf from earth to heaven; considered as benediction, it is the word of Christ coming down to us, through His minister, from heaven to earth.

Fourthly, it is exercised by preaching the word of reconciliation. That which excites to penitence, tends also to remission; and here the ministerial agency, though less direct, is not less important; here the faithful servant is assuredly treading closely in the

steps of Him who came "to proclaim liberty to the captives, the opening of the prison to them that are bound."

Fifthly, this power is exercised by direct absolution, whether public or private, whether general or particular; whether reaching prepared hearts in the congregation, or strengthening the individual sufferer against the assaults of the enemy, in the dark hour of physical exhaustion or agony, or of mental weakness and despondency. Did the Blessed Redeemer, when on earth, say to the trembling, unquiet heart, "Be not afraid, only believe;" and may not His servant say the same, with all the cogent emphasis which the extremity of his needs demands, to him who bitterly repents him of his sin, and heartily believes that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," and yet is beguiled by the evil one to doubt or to deny that He who willeth all men to be saved, wills his own salvation?

It will be observed that, in the above particulars, the absolving power of the Christian minister is made to extend to widely differing departments of his service; and there is, I think, good reason to believe that this wondrous power was designed by the Great Mediator to permeate the whole ministerial work, and to enrich with its blessed efficacy every portion of the faithful labour of His servants. It is well worthy of observation, that as our Blessed Lord, in the solemn form

whereby He commissioned His apostles, declares only one grand qualification for the office of the Christian ministry, even the receiving of the Holy Ghost; so does He also declare one grand result only which was to follow from the legitimate exercise of that ministry, even the remitting and the retaining of sins.

There are some who would tell us that the office of the Christian minister is purely pastoral; there are others who dwell too exclusively on its sacerdotal character. Let us be careful to shun both these extremes. They will both be avoided if we duly remember the wondrous words, "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." The Christian minister is, after his measure, to reflect in his mission the glorious mission of his Lord. He whom the Father hath sent, who is to the end of time the Messenger of the New Covenant, reveals His hidden working through the agency of man, teaches by human voice, warns by human reproof, comforts by human sympathy and gentleness, blesses by human utterance, washes from sin by water poured by human hands and by the word spoken by man, feeds, by human ministration, with the spiritual food of His own most precious Body and Blood, and tells us again and again by human lips, when we are burdened by a sense of infirmity and soiled by contact with a naughty world, that "God pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe His holy gospel."

Oh, let us never think, brethren, that because there is One, and One only, who is an High Priest over the house of God, there cannot be—there are not—upon earth those who minister in His priesthood, by whose service He unveils, as it were, His hidden presence in our midst, and makes us conscious of the invisible “powers of the world to come,” which on every side encompass us.

And you, my brethren, who are this day to be called to the service of that mighty Lord, think much of Him who is your Great Master, and know that, if you earnestly desire that the flock committed to your care may rightly apprehend their character and duties as members of the body of Christ, you will most surely promote this blessed end by a lively recognition of your own character as ministers of Christ, to whose conscience and to whose heart He is ever whispering by His Spirit, “As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you.” Ponder, then, in the depth of your hearts the wondrous import of His mission; and, in its divine light, learn to read alike the peril and the glory of your own.

## SERMON XXI.

PREACHED AT THE CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION,  
TORONTO, ON TUESDAY, JUNE 8, 1880, BEFORE THE  
SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF TORONTO.

1 TIMOTHY vi. 20.—“Keep that which is committed to thy  
trust.”

THE inquiry must often present itself to every thoughtful mind, “How shall I look back, in another life, on the life which I am passing here? How shall I read, in the light of that life, the history of God’s world and of Christ’s Church? What aspect will the events which are now taking place, the scenes by which I am now surrounded, then present?”

Nor will the mind, which thoughtfully prosecutes this inquiry, fail to arrive at the conclusion that the past must then be contemplated under conditions differing very widely from those under which we now look on the present; that, when we survey the course of this world in that higher, purer light, we must be alike astonished and humbled by a sense

of our strangely imperfect apprehension of its true import, in this our present darkness.

I am not speaking of the terrible surprise and shame which must await those who have here *hated* the light and *refused* to seek the knowledge of God's truth; but, rather, of the astonishment which even the loving, faithful servant of God cannot fail to feel when the light of the world to come shall break upon him. We may well believe that this surprise will be, at least to a great extent, inevitable, being, as it is, a necessary result of our present mortal weakness; and the anticipation of it may serve to teach us the wholesome lesson, that we can never, in our present state, form an adequate conception of those great things pertaining to the kingdom of God in the midst of which we move, of those "powers of the world to come" which are on every side "about our path." There are, beyond all question, those whose eyes are earnestly watching for the morning, who must yet fail to realize what that morning shall disclose, not only of the future but of the past.

We may compare their present condition to that of a traveller, who, in the dimness of twilight, arrives for the first time in some scene of surpassing grandeur and beauty; he may, indeed, even then, trace the dim outline of the mountains; he may, even then, be conscious, by reflected lights, that he is treading on the margin of some mighty water; but till the day

dawns, and the sun bathes the landscape in its beams, he must remain ignorant, alike of the manifold loveliness of the details, and of the sublimity and glory of the whole.

It is only in the light of the heavenly morning that man can be fully enabled to read aright those wondrous works and purposes of God, on which he now looks "through a glass darkly." So far, then, as this ignorance is inevitable, we must meekly acquiesce in it, as a wise appointment of God; but, on the other hand, we must bear in mind that there are limits, within which this ignorance is not inevitable; that we may, by a right use of our opportunities, by a due exercise of our powers, and, most of all, by a solicitous cultivation of our higher and purer affections, do very much to remove the feebleness and dimness of our apprehension of those sacred objects, which should be to us, as Christian men, so dear.

Thoughts such as these may well be present to our minds, as we attempt to apprehend, in its application to ourselves, the import of S. Paul's injunction, given in the text, to his beloved son Timothy, "Guard the deposit entrusted to thee;" an injunction repeated near the beginning of his second Epistle, "Guard, through the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us, the goodly [or precious] deposit."

*What* the deposit was we may not doubt. It was the Christian faith, in its entirety and purity; and



the contexts, in which the apostle's repeated warning occurs, present to us the occasions which even then rendered it necessary. "Profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science, falsely so called," were, even then, undermining the faith of their authors and of those who listened to them; and it was requisite that even one, who had received from the lips of S. Paul himself "the form of sound words," should be exhorted to "hold it fast."

But to us, brethren, at this far later stage of the Church's history, the admonition of the apostle comes fraught with many a lesson, to be drawn from the experience of the past, and also from the peculiar circumstances in which we find ourselves placed, by the good providence of Almighty God, as members of the Church of England. The admonition is still the same, but we cannot doubt that he, through whom the Spirit of God first gave it, would now address it to us with a special meaning, and in a tone of pressing urgency.

The deposit which we must guard is, indeed, none other than that which was entrusted to Timothy; but it has come into our hands under peculiar conditions, and with accompanying circumstances, which, if they be duly considered, cannot but appeal most strongly to our understandings and our affections.

What a wondrous history is the history of the Church of England! God forbid that I should speak here a single word dictated by erring fondness for

that which is our own, much less by vain boasting of an heritage which we may dream has been purchased for us by the wisdom or the high resolve of man. The fathers and the children may alike deplore errors of judgment and infirmities of conduct; but, looking away from man to God—to His wondrous working, by means of widely differing human agencies—must we not, indeed, consider, with devout and humble admiration, the way by which the Lord our God has led us? At every step we find cause alike for contrite confession and for praise. Twice has our Church, as purged from the errors of Romanism, been stricken to the dust; once by the arm of Rome herself, and again by Puritan fanaticism.

Twice, through God's grace, has she arisen, in fresh strength and lustre, from her overthrow. And when at length she consented, in some degree, to recognize her duty and her true glory, and to interpret, in the light of God, the meaning of England's commercial greatness and marvellously extended empire, what has not God done—what does He not show Himself, from day to day, still ready to do—in giving, through her agency, to His blessed Son, the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession?

In His wondrous providence, moreover, there are associated with us in this blessed work those who, no longer connected with us by civil ties, still abide with

us in spiritual union, rejoicing with us, with one heart and with one soul, over the mercies both of the past and of the present. Does not, then, the past and the present history of our Church commend to us the fervent acknowledgment, "Whoso is wise will ponder these things, and they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord;" "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give the praise, for Thy loving mercy, and for Thy truth's sake"? Does not our Church's history most powerfully appeal to us to guard with all fidelity the deposit which has been committed to our trust, as being, in the providence of God, her members or her ministers?

But again, let us observe some features of that Church which God has thus strangely preserved, and is so widely extending.

The deposit of the faith may be regarded under a more simple or a more complex form. Any Christian man who can recite the Apostles' Creed, may be said to have the deposit of the faith stored in his memory; but how much more, "pertaining to life and godliness," does he not require, both for the enlightening of his understanding and for the guidance of his life?

Brethren, do we consider as we ought the precious form in which the Christian faith has been delivered to us, in our Book of Common Prayer? It has been recently affirmed by a distinguished Presbyterian, in a sermon delivered on the fortieth anniversary of his

pastorate, that "the Church, if she would fulfil her mission, must avail herself of the riches which her children during all these ages have been gathering for her." God, then, guided the hearts of those who reformed our Liturgy to recognize this principle, and to appropriate, with all fidelity and reverence, the treasures of the past. It has been well observed, moreover, that the good providence of God may be discerned in respect of the *time* at which the Liturgy and other services of the Church were translated into our vernacular. It was not simply neglect which delayed this work ; there were formidable obstacles in the way of its accomplishment ; and, in respect of our own country, there scarcely existed, until the sixteenth century, a common English language, which could be "understood of the" whole "people."

And how marvellously was this newly moulded language employed by those who prepared the English Prayer-book ! A comparison of the ancient Latin collects with the translation will convince any competent observer, that not only were the riches of the past preserved to us, but also that "scribes instructed unto the kingdom of heaven" were moved to "bring forth" for us "out of their treasures things new" as well as "old."

The exquisite beauty with which the germ of thought in the original has often been developed, the deeply reverential tone of the composition, must re-

peatedly move us to confess how graciously God has given to the children of our Church a priceless treasury of devotion ; providing for us thus tenderly, in these latter days, holy words of penitence and faith and love, by means of which He has surely touched the hearts of multitudes innumerable, whether in our public services, or in acts of more private devotion—in times of temporal or spiritual distress, and at the last great hour of need.

Here is, indeed, the deposit of the faith, elucidated and interpreted in all its fulness. Learned and unlearned, the wayfaring man and the little child, are here instructed, in respect of their manifold necessities and obligations, in respect of their diversified relations both to God and to man, what it is to believe the gospel of Christ.

Again, there is a most important feature of our Church, in respect of which we must surely feel how urgent is the duty faithfully to guard the deposit which has been committed to our trust. We cannot but regard as a most signal instance of God's wondrous working for us, the circumstance that He accorded to us the power, which many others did not possess, of retaining in its integrity the constitution of the Church as it has existed from apostolic times. Surely a thoughtful man must ask, with all reverence, *why* God thus dealt with us ; nor will he permit himself to hold the gift in less esteem, because it was not

vouchsafed to others. Was the "showing of God's word unto Jacob, of His statutes and ordinances unto Israel," a privilege less to be valued by them, because "He had not dealt so with any" other "nation"? We are not to condemn or despise others who may have received less than ourselves; we are bound to think tenderly of them, and earnestly to desire and pray that what is wanting to them may be supplied; but a reverent recognition of the truth that God does nothing in vain, and a survey of the history of the last three hundred years, may surely lead us to the conclusion that it was not without a great purpose of wisdom and of love that Almighty God preserved to us, in our Church, those three orders of ministers, of which the preface to our Ordinal tells us, that "it is evident unto all men, diligently reading the Holy Scripture and ancient authors, that from the apostles' time they have existed in the Church."

As we contemplate, then, brethren, the past history and the present condition of Christendom, is it not our duty to confess to Almighty God that He has entrusted to us, as members of the Church of England, the deposit of His truth, under conditions and circumstances which bear signal witness to His fatherly love and care for us? If it be, indeed, our duty to regard our ecclesiastical polity as a blessing which has been secured to us by the grace and favour of God—if, in this regard, we have indeed cause to say, "The

lines are fallen to us in pleasant places ; yea, we have a goodly heritage"—then let us be very careful never ourselves to speak or to act, never to lead others to speak or to act, in the spirit of those of whom we read, that "they thought scorn of that pleasant land" which God had given them. Do men never speak thus faithlessly, thus slightly, of the constitution of the Church, as if it were, at the best, but a human device, more ingenious than other organizations, if not rather the outworn relic of a bygone age, to be tolerated rather than esteemed ?

Again, if our English Book of Common Prayer be indeed a precious treasure-house, in which is stored for our use the deposit of the Christian faith, must we not be very careful to guard it from neglect, to secure to it its due honour ? Are we, then, as careful as we should be here ? Do we teach ourselves, and others who may be committed to our care, to realize the special grace which we have received in that form of sound words, so fitted at once to enliven and to instruct the spirit of prayer ? Have we never allowed ourselves, or tempted others, to act, in respect of this spiritual sustenance, as rebellious Israel did in respect of the manna, and to regard that, which may well be esteemed as angels' food, as "light bread, which our souls loathe," and which we must perforce exchange for grosser food, better suited to the cravings of a morbid appetite ?

It is, again, a practice with some, when they would define the teaching of the Church of England, to appeal to her Articles only; and we sometimes hear it affirmed by persons who do not belong to her communion, that her Liturgy and Articles are not in harmony with each other, the former being Arminian and the latter Calvinistic. If this assertion were correct, our order for public prayer and for the administration of the sacraments must have been, not only in respect of its ancient substance, but also in respect of its modern form, Arminian before Arminius, and our Articles Calvinistic at a time when the name of Calvin was scarcely known in England. As honest men, we could not give our assent alike to the Liturgy and to the Articles if their doctrine were irreconcilable; nor are we guarding the deposit as faithful men, if we give any colour to this unfounded and injurious statement.

The two formularies are, indeed, of a character widely distinct. The Liturgy is the voice of the Church for all times—her solemn offering of prayer and praise, presented, with upward glance, to God in heaven; her Articles are words of defence, extorted from her by the necessities of controversy—uttered to explain and justify her position in the face of a divided Christendom. The Liturgy may be likened to the “goodly raiment,” in which the Church rejoices to stand and minister in the house of God; the Articles to armour,



which she reluctantly assumes, to shield herself from calumny, and her children from the wiles of her adversaries. Yet may she adopt, without inconsistency, alike the priestly garments and the warlike array; and we are not true to her, we fail to guard the deposit, if we admit that the two agree not together. Be it also borne in mind, that they who framed our Articles of Religion had their understandings and their affections most thoroughly imbued with the doctrine of our Liturgy; and that we are bound, therefore, if any doubt should arise, so to interpret the former as that they may not contradict the latter. Some years ago justly deserved condemnation was passed on a non-natural interpretation of the Articles. Be it remembered that a non-natural interpretation of the language of our Book of Common Prayer is, with equal justice, open to the same censure: that it is, if possible, yet more censurable, because the language of our services is directly addressed to, or uttered in the presence of, Almighty God, in the most sacred actions of our lives.

Be it remembered, too, that the *lex orandi* is, for all of us to a very large extent, for many of us altogether, the *lex credendi*. The ordinary Christian man practically derives the substance of his faith from the words of confession, prayer, and praise which he is taught to address to God, and from words which he is instructed to take with him, or which are solemnly

addressed to him or uttered in his audience, when he approaches the baptismal font or the Holy Table of the Lord.

We cannot be "guarding the deposit" if we give, or teach others to give, a non-natural sense to the language of the Baptismal Office, of the Catechism, of the Office for the Administration of the Holy Communion, or of the Ordinal: we are not handing on, as faithful stewards, that which has been committed to our trust, except we give their full significance to both the Confessions of our Church; whether to the loftier Confession, which she ever offers before God, or to that which occupies a lower ground, as being her apology or answer to those who would assail her position as a Reformed communion.

Suffer me to mention another point, which is essential to the "guarding of the deposit." A complaint is not unfrequently made of those who preach, not Christ, but the Church. I do not deny that the want of a right understanding of Christian truth, and of a due feeling of its sacred character, may possibly lead to this monstrous result; but I would venture to remind you, brethren, that if we would "guard the deposit" faithfully, we must preach *both* Christ *and* His Church. If it be possible so to preach the Church as to ignore the surpassing glory of her Head, it is also possible so to preach Christ as if there were no Church of which He is the Head. It is, indeed, a fatal

error not to "hold the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered and being knit together, increaseth with the increase of God;" but it is also a most grievous error so to hold the Head as to ignore the divinely appointed organization, through which, as the apostle in these words assures us, the nourishment of the body is dispensed, and its unity and strength secured.

Our Blessed Lord cannot be more truly honoured by our refusing to recognize that Church "which He loved, and for which He gave Himself"—that Church which S. Paul elsewhere declares to be "the pillar and ground of the truth." It is not safe to regard our Lord as the teacher of a philosophy, however divine, rather than as the founder of an eternal kingdom; our relation to Him necessarily involves an organized relation to each other, determined by divine and unchanging laws. The branches of the True Vine partake together of one common life; they who belong to Christ are members of one Body—stones builded together into one spiritual temple. Nor can we speak faithfully of Christ the Vine, of Christ the Head, of Christ the chief Corner-Stone, without speaking also of that wondrous spiritual structure, His gracious relation to which is marked by the many names of love and power which are assigned to Him in Holy Scripture.

Some persons may be tempted not "to guard the

deposit" in certain points, by the hope of conciliating those who are unhappily separated from us. They may desire to withdraw what others regard as unauthorized pretensions, and so to occupy a common ground with them. What, then, must be the necessary effect of their doing so, while "the deposit," as enshrined in the formularies of our Church, remains what it is? They must deprive themselves of all excuse, before God and man, for using or assenting to those formularies. So long as they honestly "guard the deposit," they may be regarded, by those who differ from us, as sincere though mistaken; but so soon as they betray "the deposit," they necessarily incur the grievous charge of insincerity. And, more than this, so far as their action is concerned, the Church becomes degraded into the most presumptuous and arrogant of sects, presuming, as she does from their point of view, to utter before God words of most awful and solemn import, to which her heart does not respond, and before men to make pretences and speak "great swelling words of vanity," while she yet repudiates her title to any real distinction from other Christian bodies which put forward no such claims. If we will not "guard the deposit" which has been committed to our trust as a Church, we have no alternative but to renounce it openly and honestly, having first put to ourselves with all seriousness the momentous inquiry, "Did that deposit come to us from the hand of God, or no?"

But whither will men turn, if they should unhappily resolve to forsake the historic Church of the past, which we are taught to believe and to confess, as retaining to the end of the world her imperishable continuity, marvellously as she may be taught to adapt herself to the needs of successive generations, and to the various characteristics of "the nation of them that are saved, that shall walk in her light"? Does there float before the mental vision of some that vague, impalpable phantom which men venture to call "The Church of the Future"?—a thing of negations and evasions and equivocations, the very charm of which lies, not in what it shall affirm, but in what it shall deny; not in what it shall hold fast, but in what it shall consent to yield; not in what it shall be, but in what it shall abstain from being;—a shadowy, formless apparition, to which the description of the poet may be most justly applied—

"If shape it might be called, that shape had none  
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb;  
Or substance might be called that shadow seemed,  
For each seemed either."

Once more, brethren, let me present to you that which appears to many a further and most cogent reason for unflinching steadfastness and faithfulness to our high trust. I refer to the remarkable position in which the Church of England has stood ever since the Reformation, in respect of all other Christian bodies

throughout the world ; and more than ever at this day stands, by virtue of her own wide extension and of her intercommunion with other branches of the Church Catholic, holding the same faith and observing the same order with herself. George Herbert, in the seventeenth century, gave beautiful expression to his profound sense of her strangely unique position ; while the hopes and responsibilities attaching to this position have been recognized, in very striking terms, by the Romanist, Joseph de Maistre, in the early part of this century. The note of warning and encouragement, the invitation to trembling hope and expectation, to patient abiding in the place where God has set us, humbly preparing ourselves to do His bidding, and careful, above all things, not to forfeit, by any act of impatience or self-will, that vantage-ground which has been so wonderfully assigned to us—this note, I say, has been again sounded, a few months since, in England, by a distinguished prelate of our Church. His words are : “ If there be any guiding hand in the progress of history, if there be any Supreme Providence in the control of events, if there be any Divine Presence and any Divine call—then the position of England, as the mother of so many colonies and dependencies, the heart and centre of the world’s commerce and manufacture, and the position of the English Church, standing midway between extremes in theological teaching and ecclesiastical order, point

to the Church of this nation, with the very finger of God Himself, as called by Him to the lofty task of reconciling a distracted Christendom and healing the wounds of the nations." \*

For the sake, then, of this inspiring hope, under the sense of this overwhelming responsibility, let us as members of that vast communion, whose worship ascends to God from well-nigh every portion of our globe, resolve by His help to "guard the deposit" which He has committed to our trust, and to stand still in the safe paths of duty and obedience, if haply our eyes or our children's eyes may be blessed by seeing this great "salvation of God."

\* Sermon of the Bishop of Durham, on the opening of the S.P.C.K. rooms, Northumberland Avenue, November 3, 1879.

## SERMON XXII.

PREACHED IN TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL ON SUNDAY,  
JUNE 20, 1880, BEING THE LAST SUNDAY IN THE  
ACADEMICAL YEAR.

PSALM xc. 17.—“ Establish Thou the work of our hands upon  
us ; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it.”

IN addressing you, probably, for the last time from this place, I have, for many reasons, which appear to me weighty, resolved to abstain, as far as possible, from matters of a personal kind. I have already had opportunities of expressing very imperfectly the feelings with which I regard my approaching separation from you ; to many and the most solemn of these feelings no expression can be given, or should be attempted ; those which lie nearer the surface have found, or may find, expression elsewhere.

I propose then, at present, to address myself to a duty which has not unfrequently been urged upon me ; a duty which, I think, I may more seasonably discharge now than I could have done at an earlier period ; a duty, too, which, I trust, may not be incongruous with this sacred time and place, but may justly claim,



as pertaining to God and to His Church, to be performed on His day and in His house.

I will endeavour, then, to trace the history of the origin of this college; and, on that history, to base my steadfast conviction of what its future ought to be. Many of the circumstances which led to its foundation are, I believe, unknown to some and forgotten by others. Yet their character is most significant and instructive.

A large grant of the waste lands of the crown was made by King George the Third, in 1791, for the maintenance of religious instruction in this country, according to the forms of the United Church of England and Ireland; and in 1797 a like grant was made for the purposes of education, more especially for the support of grammar schools and a university. The work contemplated was for many years delayed, by the slow advance of the colony in wealth and population during the long European war; and it was not until 1827 that a Royal Charter was granted by King George the Fourth, for erecting a college or university in the province of Upper Canada.

Under this charter the university was generally open to all, without the exaction of any religious test either from professors or from scholars; yet, in order to connect the university to some extent with the Church of England, the members of the college council were required to be members of that Church,

and to subscribe her articles, as were also the professor of divinity and all graduates in that faculty.

To satisfy objections raised against these restrictions, they were modified in the reign of King William the Fourth and all members of the college council, and all professors thereafter to be appointed, were required simply to make a declaration that they believed in the authenticity and divine inspiration of the Old and New Testaments, and in the doctrine of the Trinity. These modifications were, with the king's assent, introduced into the Royal Charter by an act of the Legislature of Upper Canada, and on this basis the university was established, the foundation stone of the building being laid April 23rd, 1842, and King's College, as the university was styled, being opened June 8th, 1843.

It could scarcely be anticipated that the large concessions which had been made, would not create a demand for more. The existence of a Faculty of Divinity in the college for the exclusive teaching of the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, and also the use of her Liturgy within its walls, were regarded as invasions of religious liberty, and on May 30th, 1849, an Act was passed which took effect on January 1st, 1850, by which the Royal Charter granted to King's College was virtually repealed, being so amended as to retain no longer any of those advantages which the Royal Charter had been de-

signed to secure to members of the Church of England, in respect of the religious education of their children.

A very strong feeling was awakened in this country under circumstances so painful, and a great effort was made, an effort nobly aided by the members of our Church at home, and afterwards by our brother Churchmen in the United States, to provide some substitute for the richly endowed institution, of which the members of our Church could no longer avail themselves for the highest purposes for which it had been provided.

In 1850 Bishop Strachan, at the age of seventy-two, undertook a voyage to England to advocate the claims of a new college to a Royal Charter, and also to procure material aid for its erection. During his stay in London he had more than one personal interview on the subject of his mission with the late Sir Robert Peel. The bishop's account of those interviews is most interesting, and it is satisfactory to observe how strongly this distinguished statesman recognized the injustice to which our Church had been subjected, in having wrested from her an institution which had been designed for the general benefit of the community, under her guardianship and control. Sir Robert Peel's calamitous death, however, abruptly closed his communications with Bishop Strachan.

Such, then, were the conditions under which this college was founded. In the first instance a Pro-

vincial Act of Incorporation only was obtained for it, and when the college was opened on January 15th, 1852, it was simply on this basis; our future was still uncertain; we knew not, as yet, under what conditions our students were to obtain degrees. A petition to the Queen for a Royal Charter had, however, been already presented through the Government of Canada, but in 1850, neither the Colonial nor the Imperial Government was disposed to favour the petition; a change of government at home, however, took place, and on July 16th, 1852, the Royal Charter was granted, constituting Trinity College a university. We were thus relieved from all doubt and difficulty, and our earliest students were enabled to prosecute their studies almost from the first, with an assurance that the place in which they were receiving their education was empowered to send them forth with the due credentials to which ability and diligence might entitle them. Sir John Robinson, then Chief Justice of Upper Canada, was installed as our first Chancellor, June 3rd, 1853.

Such is a very brief sketch of the circumstances which led to the establishment of Trinity College, and to its being invested with the power of conferring degrees. Those to whose patient persevering efforts the college and the university, under Divine Providence, owe their existence, would regard, probably, with great surprise and regret, the fact that any

among us should be now doubting whether the position which they achieved for us should be retained or abandoned; and those of us who can recollect what manner of men they were who then fought our battle, cannot think without something like indignant emotion that such a question should be for a moment entertained. I believe, however, that it may be shown that not generous feeling only, but also sound calm reason, may prompt us to hold fast what we have, and have acquired in so unlikely, so unlooked-for a manner.

The proposition that there should be in this province one university only, having power to confer degrees in arts, law, and medicine, is one which may be supported by very specious arguments; I am, however, disposed to think that strong counter arguments might be urged, by those whose interest extends to secular education only. These arguments, nevertheless, if such exist, I am content to waive, and to point to those alone which are involved in the transcendent importance of religious training. It will be said—it has been said—to us, "Resign your charter, or suspend your exercise of the powers which it gives you; teach your students, with the advantage which must accrue from the wholesome stimulus furnished by competition with candidates from other colleges, and by the offer of richer prizes."

If Trinity College had been founded only for the

purpose of giving secular instruction, this argument would undoubtedly possess great weight; but we know that men, whose memory we justly venerate, appealed to Churchmen here, and to Churchmen and Church societies at home and in the States, for a very different purpose, which purpose was to ensure for the sons of our Church that religious instruction, which had unhappily been eliminated from the system of the newly constituted university. We are most solemnly bound, then, to do nothing which may to any extent frustrate this most important object; and we should be doing very much to frustrate it altogether if we consented to place our charter in abeyance, and to send our students to undergo examinations in arts at a provincial university. In making this provision we should be throwing most formidable obstacles in the way of any young man who might desire to enrol himself among our students; we should be telling him, "You will be required to attend lectures, and to pass college examinations, in subjects which will avail you nothing in your university course;" we should be weighting him, by demands on his time and attention, which would place him at an appreciable disadvantage, in respect of other competitors, in the university examinations; and it would be no matter of surprise if we found many an earnest Churchman, under these circumstances, saying, "I heartily wish that I could send my son to

Trinity, but the change which you have seen fit to make compels me, in justice to himself, to send him elsewhere." Nor would there be any remedy for this, except we should consent to retain the empty name of a Church university, while we gave no distinctive Church teaching, yielding to the pressure which would inevitably be brought to bear upon us, and ceasing to require a course of study which would be found, under the circumstances which we are contemplating, to discourage and repel those who would otherwise gladly enter within our walls.

There are things good in the abstract which, under certain conditions, cease to be desirable. There are advantages, of no questionable kind, for which it is yet possible to pay too high a price; and I am by no means sure that a price far too high may not be paid—is not even now being paid—for a national system of higher education, when its necessary condition is the elimination of religious teaching. The days in which we live may warn us of the tendency of those systems, which, in respect of religious belief and practice, would attempt to maintain an impartial neutrality, an unimpassioned silence. Is this neutrality always observed—is this silence always maintained? Purely scientific subjects are handled very differently by those who hold, and by those who do not hold, the Christian faith; and the system which invokes the aid of the man of science,

without regard to his belief, can scarcely hope to secure the services of one who will not, either openly or covertly, assail that which he is under no official obligation to defend. This is not mere presumption; experience attests its truth. Great names may be adduced on both sides—equally possessed of admirable reasoning power, equally devoted to scientific inquiry, equally inspired by the honest love of speculative truth; but, on the one side, we have reverence for God's Word in Revelation, restraining hasty theories as to the import of His imperfectly deciphered word in nature; while, on the other, the absence of such reverence gives the rein to unbridled speculation, and theories are presumptuously propounded, subversive of the faith of the unlearned and unstable, to be themselves subverted in their turn by others, which are again destined to be as short-lived as their fore-runners.

I hold, then, that the purpose for which this college was founded, is one which the temper of the age in which we live is but investing, from year to year, with the more profound importance; that it is still necessary, that it is becoming increasingly necessary, that there should be an educational institution in our midst, independent of those injurious influences of which I have been speaking; untainted, if it so please God, by the Proteus-like infidelity of the times: an institution where the young may be taught,



with all reverence, to confess the common origin of the word and of the works of God; and to acknowledge, in all the majesty and mercy of His twofold relation to mankind, Him "by whom the Father made the worlds," and "who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven."

We are bound, then, I hold, looking to the purpose of our founders and of the liberal benefactors of this college, faithfully to guard the trust committed to us, and to maintain it as a Church university. Some would, indeed, urge us to make a still greater sacrifice, and to renounce our functions, even as a college, except for students in divinity.

It is, in their opinion, a vast advantage to a young man, fresh from school, to be thrown into familiar intercourse with youths of different religious denominations; to unlearn, in converse with them, the narrow prejudices of his earlier training, and to rise to broader and juster views of his relations with his brother men. I doubt very much the benefit of such associations, or rather I doubt not at all how subtly dangerous their influence must be—how sure they will be to impair faith, rather than to inculcate charity: nor can I forget that there now exists in educational institutions, in which secular instruction alone is communicated, a large and, as is to be feared, a rapidly increasing proportion of those who avow no religious belief at all; whose practice is

controlled by no religious principle, and to intimate fellowship with whom no parent can, without guilt, deliberately expose his child. There are some who even avow the persuasion that a training like this is a far better introduction to a course of study for Holy Orders, than the narrow sphere which a Church college presents. For my own part, I think that the world, with all its laxity of practice, and vagueness of opinion rather than of belief, is ever near enough to us all; and that the young require far more to be instructed as to the way in which they should go, than to be perplexed and distressed by a premature encounter with "divers and strange doctrines" and theories.

I have something to say as to the position of this college as a place designed for the training both of lay members and of the clergy of our Church in this province. And first of the laity: one great evil from which the Church has bitterly suffered in times past, has been the want of an intelligent apprehension of her doctrine and discipline on the part of her lay members. This must often result in a want of zeal for her welfare, and even where such zeal exists, it cannot be according to knowledge. Looking to the past, I think that we may humbly thank God that *something* at least has been done here to form intelligent and devout lay members of our Church. I hope that much more may be done in years to come; and, as we value this hope, I would pray all to whom the

interests of the college are entrusted, for this hope's sake, to maintain the college in its integrity as a Church university.

As a place of training for our clergy, the college is, as I conceive, bound to keep strictly to the ground of the Church of England; making her formularies the guide both of its teaching and of its practice. We should, I hold, be well content with what the Church of England expressly commends to our belief and our observance, not venturing ourselves to act, or to teach others to act, on the hazardous hypothesis that she is always to be understood to permit that which she has not expressly forbidden.

It has sometimes been urged that, what we moderns have learned to call "different schools of thought," should be represented in the college, and we have been told that this is the case in the English universities. It may be so in fact; it is not so in theory or in intention. Men are there appointed to professorships on the ground of their abilities and acquirements, without special reference to their opinions, and certainly in no case with a view to their becoming exponents of the system of any particular school. The attempt to assume this position would, I should say, be entirely alien to the province of a professor, and to a just estimate of his official duty. We have already had amongst us as professors in this college, gentlemen marked by different shades of opinion, and so long as

these differences lie within certain limits, recognized by our Church, they may be productive of good rather than of evil. I humbly conceive that the governing body of this college will do wisely in seeking from those to whom the office of instruction may be hereafter confided, a cordial acceptance of the formularies of our Church, nor can I imagine that any true Churchman can look with just suspicion or dislike on teaching which is confessedly in accordance with these formularies.

No school of theology, in our Church, which is loyally and without reserve attached to her plain teaching, can have any occasion to announce "distinctive principles" of its own; on the contrary, by so doing, it exposes itself at once to the imputation of establishing itself as an *imperium in imperio*, for which the "distinctive principles" of the Church herself are either too broad or too narrow. I am glad to be able to quote the words of a well-known member of the evangelical party in England to this effect, in opposing the adoption of "distinctive principles" for Wycliffe Hall, at Oxford. He said, "Our platform must not be narrower than that of the Church of England, must not be less than the whole Prayer-book." It is to be apprehended that there are within our Church extreme men who would rejoice to see the Prayer-book revised, and who have not unreasonable grounds for uneasiness until such revision shall

have been brought about. I conceive that in a Church college like this, our only safety lies in seeking the services of men, who not only do not desire, but would very strongly deprecate, any material changes in our Book of Common Prayer, and who, knowing the peril which must attend any change whatever, are well content that none whatever should be introduced.

No very long time has passed since the establishment of this college, on its existing footing, was most ardently desired and most vigorously prosecuted. I trust it may be very long ere any attempt shall be made to undo, in any respect, the work which was then so happily accomplished. There seemed, for some time, but slight expectation of our obtaining a Royal Charter; and when I consider the very grave issues involved in the fact of our possessing it, the far ampler opportunities which we consequently enjoy of instructing young men in the principles of the Christian faith; when I contrast our present position with that which we should probably have now been occupying had the charter been withheld, I cannot think that we err in confessing, in this regard, the merciful providence of God, and in looking upon the privilege which has been accorded to us, as a gift received at His hands, and to be guarded, piously and jealously, as a talent entrusted to us for His glory and for the good of His Church among us.

And I think that we may thus guard it with good hope for the future.

We have been told that it is hopeless for a foundation, possessing resources no larger than ours, to attempt to hold its ground as a place of general university education; and it must be allowed that we are not at present prepared to meet, as fully as more richly endowed societies, the expense attendant on the teaching of some branches of science, which are now especially popular and are recommended by their great practical utility; yet we ought not to doubt that the liberality of Churchmen will surely enable us to make the teaching of the college at least *sufficient* in this department; while I am satisfied that we may still give most efficiently, what was formerly regarded as constituting, and does still to a very large extent constitute, the education of a gentleman. It must be by our own fault if we do not continue to enjoy a reputation for solid classical training, and if our mathematical standard does not remain at least equal to that which is maintained elsewhere; and I believe that as the country progresses in wealth and in culture, we shall find, among its best and worthiest families, many who will be glad to seek, in addition to these advantages, the priceless benefits of such an education as can be given only on Christian principles, and under the hallowed shelter of the Church of Christ.

The past leaves to us, as must ever be the case, many a cause for humiliation and regret; but, thank God, it leaves us also many an occasion for gratitude

and hope. Let us, then, be of good courage, and offer with trustful hearts the prayer of the text: "And the work of our hands, oh, establish upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it." "That which we have attempted in our feebleness, let Thy Almighty Hand make permanent."

But, remember, it is the "work of *our* hands" which we pray God to establish; the *human* work—the *human* effort—however feeble, must be there, to be prospered and established by His almighty power and by His tender mercy. Let us be true to Him—true to the lofty aims and pious counsels of those who preceded us, true to our own sacred principles, as none can be true save those who have learned to "look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen," to look away from the false glare and glitter of the world, to that which God Himself accounts to be most precious and most honourable.

On some to whom I am now speaking the weight of this responsibility does not as yet rest; they have not as yet to advise and act for the well-being of the college, and they cannot wisely seek to anticipate the time when this burden will rest upon them. It will come all too soon: meanwhile, during their happy immunity from it, there does rest upon them what should ever be regarded as a most welcome and inspiring obligation, the obligation to advance the

welfare of the society, into which they have been admitted, by personal excellence, and by a diligent use of the faculties with which God has endowed them, and of the means of improvement which He has here placed within their reach. The great Bishop Selwyn is still held in grateful remembrance by those who knew him at Eton and at Cambridge, as one who exhibited before them the fair example of a pure and honourable Christian life. We see, in his instance, how great, how glorious, may be the issue of such a boyhood, and of such a youth. Examples such as his go very far to prosper and to establish the institutions which they have adorned. Pray God, then, "the Protector of all that trust in Him, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy, to increase and multiply upon you His mercy," so that both your example here, and your future conduct in the world, may tend, by His grace, to establish the work of their hands, who once founded, or who still foster, this college.

NOTE.—I take this opportunity of placing on record the following instances of noble generosity, discovered by members of the Church of England, in assisting in the establishment of Trinity College. When the venerable Bishop Strachan visited England in 1850, for the purpose of appealing to the sympathies of English Churchmen on behalf of the effort he was about to make, he received from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel £2000, and a donation of seven acres and a half of land in the city of Toronto, of at least equal value. From the Society



for Promoting Christian Knowledge he received £3000, and from the University of Oxford £500. The subscriptions of individuals resident in England exceeded £4000. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, moreover, being (under the Act 3 and 4 Vict.) entrusted with the management of the Clergy Reserves in Canada, appropriated on May 19th, 1848, a sum of £1200 currency per annum, to the maintenance of a theological institution in the diocese of Toronto. This amount was made over to Trinity College at its opening in January, 1851; and a yearly income of the same amount has been derived, since the commutation of the Clergy Reserves, from the sum then awarded to the college, as compensation for its loss of income from this source.